

THE
G I R L
OF THE
MOUNTAINS.

A NOVEL,
IN FOUR VOLUMES,
BY MRS. PARSONS,
AUTHOR OF WOMEN AS THEY ARE, &c.

A noble Spirit acquires new Strength from Adversity.---The Mind
is not to be *subdued* by the Vicissitudes of Life, though its feelings
may be wounded by the unjust Persecution of the World.

VOL. III.



PRINTED FOR WILLIAM LANE,

AT THE

Minerva-Press,

BRADENHALL-STREET.

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PRINTED FOR WILLIAM LANE,

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Old Bailey,

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IN DUBLIN.



THE
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I WAS carried to a convent, so borne down with sorrow, fear, and suspense, that every one believed I was forced there against my inclinations. At taking leave the Countess bid me assure myself "all would be well." I understood the force of these words, but they could not calm the tumults of my mind, or speak peace to my

vol. III. B bosom.



bosom. Two days I passed in such anguish, that the good nuns were frightened at my haggard looks and unceasing sorrows : they endeavoured all in their power to console me, but in vain.

The third day I received a small parcel of linen from the Countess ; a scrap of paper was pinned to a cap.—“ I hope my little friend is in better spirits ; *every thing is as we could wish ; our dear friend is well ;—* next week you will see her.”

These few equivocal lines gave me such inexpressible delight, that the good sisters were amazed at this immediate alteration in my spirits. Indeed I was for a time almost wild with joy, as I interpreted the words as designed to assure me that my father had some how escaped, and that I should see him the following week. After some hours, however, the violence of my emotions abated, doubt and uncertainty returned, and though I endeavoured to banish



banish fear, yet I could not entertain permanent hope.

In this state I continued a week, almost tortured to death by my anxiety, when one afternoon the Countess came to fetch me. "I am come (said she) to take from you this young lady, who I find is not fond of a convent, and shall bring you one of a similar name, but with more inclination to please and give pleasure.

"The latter is a relation of my own;—this young lady is going to travel with a dear friend of her's, who has long been ill, is now recovering, and advised to go abroad. I believe you will have no cause to regret the exchange, when *my* Miss Dupont comes here."

The nuns did not pretend what they could not feel, any sorrow that I was to leave them. The distress of my mind had so entirely engaged me, that I had paid no kind of attention to them, or sought to

make myself agreeable, we therefore parted with civility, but no more. I was eager to ask her some questions : "Suspend your curiosity for the present, (said she ;) you will soon know all."

We drove at a great rate out of the city, to a small house on the skirts of the wood, Bois de Boulogne. We alighted, and entered ; the first person I saw was our friendly physician. I gave a cry of joy, and eagerly caught his hand.

"I understand you, (said he softly ;) you will see him to-morrow night."

"My good child, (said the Countess,) be discreet and cautious ; remember your oath, and that more than one life depends upon your prudence. A certain person will tell you every thing : in this place be silent ; even walls have ears."

I found this house belonged to the physician : we entered a small boudoir ; some
coffee

coffee and sweetmeats were brought by an old woman, the only domestic there. When she had withdrawn, the Countess asked if the parcel had arrived. He answered yes.—Turning to me, “My love, (said he,) you must put on boy’s clothes: as near as we could possibly judge, we have provided for you; if they do not exactly fit, we have no time to be fastidious:—let us retire to dress.”

We passed into a smaller closet; she condescended to assist me, and in a short time I was quite metamorphosed into a little boy; my eyes were blacked and apparently enlarged, a coarse kind of paint put on my cheeks, and, upon the whole, I was so totally unlike myself, that, on looking in a glass, I started at my own figure.

It was now near dusk; the carriage we came in drove up to the door. The Countess rose.

“ I leave you, my young friend ; we shall meet no more ; you will soon be where you wish, and will find I have not done things by halves. Want of humanity, whatever may be my other faults, forms no part of my character. To this worthy man’s compassion and eloquence you are principally indebted ; I take but little merit to myself. *Your* enemies are *mine*, and I was not sorry to counteract the wicked designs of two women I hate, but whose power I fear,—and serve the innocent and oppressed.—The time may arrive to assert that innocence ; but remember, while, Louisa, the king’s mother lives, you are dead to the world. I run some danger in serving you ; a discovery would infallibly be my ruin as well as your’s.

“ The king, two days since, at my request, presented me with one of your father’s forfeited estates. I could not ascertain its real value ; I have however conveyed to him sufficient to maintain him in obscurity some years, or, if he leaves the kingdom,

kingdom, as I think he ought, to pay for your pension wherever he settles : never for a moment forget your oath, and may heaven preserve you !”

I kissed her hands, tears flowing down my cheeks, I could not find words to express my feelings ; she seemed to read my heart, and allow for my youth and inexperience. The good physician attended her to the carriage : she spoke aloud ; “ You will deliver Miss Dupont safe to the porters ; in a few days I shall see her again.”

She had not been gone an hour before another carriage stopped : he hastened out to prevent an old woman’s entrance ; meantime I put a petticoat over my other cloaths, and a long wrapping cloke ; he led me out ; she had but a very imperfect view, and the driver could not observe me in the direction we were in.

Seated in the coach, it drove off.—Now, said my friend, throw off these outer garments, and put them in this parcel.—I did so. We went at a great rate : my heart beat, and every limb trembled ; but I was silent, my fellow-traveller was the same, only now and then bidding me have courage.—We had been some hours on the road, when, crossing a bridge, we turned to the right, and entered into a thick wood ; in a short time after, we stopped before the gates of a house I could discern to be white by the twilight, and the contrast of every thing dark round it.

On pulling the bell, an elderly man soon came, opened the gate, and admitted us without asking any questions. On alighting, I awkwardly followed my companion, not being quite easy in my new dress, but it was not a time for observation.

“ How does the good woman, the Countess’s nurse, do now ?—is she better ?”

“ Poorly

“ Poorly still, (replied the man,) and impatient to go home.”

“ Well, (returned the physician,) she may go to-morrow, if she is able to travel ; this boy is going to the same place, and a companion will be pleasant.”

My whole frame was thrown into agitation ; I had no doubt but that “ this old woman ” was my father. We were conducted into a room, where a good fire shewed we were expected. Some bread and fruit were upon a table, and a small bottle of cordial.

“ As I am obliged to go on to the next stage, to get a change of horses, and proceed on my journey early in the day, I shall not go to bed, (said my friend,) but the boy may be glad to rest.”

“ No, indeed, (I replied, understanding his looks,) I have slept in the carriage ; it is near day-light, and I don't want to sleep again.”

“ Well then, Anthony may go to bed, and the driver, for a few hours : there is nothing wanting, and I don’t like to keep any one up unnecessarily.”

“ The old man readily complied, and, after some time, and some little preparation, the physician stole out of the room, and returned with an old woman, walking lame, and with a stick. The latter she instantly dropped, and in a moment I found myself in the arms of my beloved father !—Our transports cannot be described ; he threw himself at the feet of our good angel ;—no language can describe our feelings.

Some time passed in mutual congratulations and acknowledgements, after which the physician desired my father would return to his apartment, where he might be called in the morning.

“ This interview over, (said he,) I hope you will both be on your guard, and meet

as

as strangers before Anthony and the house-keeper."

"The latter (said my father) is confined to her bed with the rheumatism, and from the observations of the other we have nothing to fear."

It was some time before he could be prevailed upon to leave me. He protested, that, but for expecting my arrival, and the emotions of his heart, he should never have known me, so completely was I disguised; and I am sure no human being could have suspected or discovered him.

We parted at length, and when day-light came, I took a cursory view of this pavilion, which consisted only of ten small rooms, fitted up with much taste and elegance, and completely buried in a thick wood, with rising hills behind it. This little hermitage I found was kept by the Countess of Chateau Briant, for the purpose of entertaining a party of select friends, when

she chose to retire for a few days from the great world. Indeed it was perfectly calculated for that purpose.

Anthony made his appearance at a pretty early hour. The carriage was ordered for the physician, but, previous to his departure, he asked to see the old nurse. She came limping in, and behaved very properly ; I was introduced for a companion ; she called me a good little boy, and hoped I would behave well to an old woman.

Taking leave of our good friend and preserver was a painful task. I shed a flood of tears ; my father embraced him repeatedly, and sent a profusion of thanks and blessings to the Countess, for the preservation of his child. He tore himself from us, and we took a turn in the wood to hide our emotions, and dry our tears. Here my dear parent informed me of the manner of his escape ; the recital made me shudder.

The

The prison he was confined in hung partly over the river, but the rooms were an immense height from it ; fortunately no person was resident on the side he was : many little boats were always fastened on the banks of the river, and that way afforded the only possibility of escaping : had he been a corpulent man, it would have been impracticable ; but he was much the reverse, and, on making trial, he found he could force himself through the large iron bars, though not with any clothes on ; and, after all, it was a most hazardous experiment to throw himself into the river, lest the height should kill him, or he might sink to rise no more.

No terrors however were equal to being confined in that dismal fortress for life to which he was condemned, and, if he failed, he trusted I had found friends to provide for me. Desperate and resolved, his only apprehension was, lest he might involve the

6 kind

kind physician in his own ruin, but *he* was determined to run the risk.

The day I left him he appeared sullen and ferocious to the keeper, refused his allowance, acted several extravaganeies, called upon death to save him from perpetual imprisonment, and, in fine, was compelled to so many acts of apparent distraction, that he blushed at his own duplicity, though certainly what he might dread, justified a temporary madness.

The keeper was deceived, pitied, and soothed him. When the physician called, he refused to see him, (every thing being settled between them the preceding day,) and, though he attempted to enter, accompanied by the keeper, my father threw himself into such a paroxysm of rage, that he retired, telling the man he really believed he would have a fit of insanity, and, if not better the next day, it must be dangerous to force him away, and he would do right to

to represent his situation to the king. "We will, however, (added he,) wait till to-morrow."

Thus eluding all suspicion from himself, he prepared every thing for this desperate enterprise. The weather favoured him,—nor moon, nor stars gilded the sky, but there was that kind of light which served to distinguish objects without discovering them. The preserver of my father came to the banks of the river, with a small parcel of women's apparel, sufficient to cover him, got into one of the boats, and at a small distance waited the effect of the concerted desperate enterprise.

A very few minutes after, my father forced himself, with extreme difficulty, through the bars, without the least covering, and plunged headlong into the river. The height and fall deprived him of all sense, but the physician, who had attentively watched, drew near, saw him rise, and in
the

the same instant laid hold of his arm. The air and the pull a little restored him, but he was suspended a few moments before he was capable of assisting the efforts of his friend, and getting into the boat ;—the other under the most agonizing apprehensions of being discovered by the passing boats ; happily nothing of that kind happened. My father was dressed in his disguise. They reached the shore, and the physician's house, in perfect safety.

Three days he remained shut up in a room, visited only at night by his kind preserver, who informed him, “ that, going the next morning to the prison, and inquiring of the keeper for his patient, he was told he had not yet been visited, for, expecting the king's officer with a guard to take him away, he chose to delay seeing him, if possible, till they came.

While they were talking, the guard arrived, and was informed by the keeper, of the
the

the state of distraction his prisoner had shewn the preceding day, they all entered the room together. They found every thing in disorder, the prisoner gone, his clothes torn in pieces, and scattered on the floor, with every mark, that denoted insanity which he had the power of leaving.

A general exclamation took place, and, when convinced that the Count must have thrown himself into the river, the keeper very naturally swore that none but a madman, or the devil, could go through those bars,—in which opinion they all coincided, and, as no doubt of his death ever entered their minds, all retired to make their different reports.

In the evening, the physician saw the Countess. She told him, when the account was delivered in to the king, he seemed greatly affected, and said, turning to his mother, “I must lament the unhappy end of a man to whom I owe my existence; however,

however, he has been driven into crimes that deserved punishment ; perhaps *I* have been too severe, and cannot but regret the necessity I was under of giving him up to the laws."

The countenance of Louisa underwent many changes. She made but a slight and vague reply, " that it became not his character to make any discrimination between criminals, nor was he answerable for the event."

She soon after quitted the king's closet much disturbed. The affair was talked of through the city the following day, but as the principal persons concerned at court avoided the subject, the talk soon subsided.

Such was the intelligence brought to my father, during his confinement. The fourth day the physician took an opportunity of sending the servants out on different errands, while my father, properly equipped, was found by them

them on their return as a lame old woman, nurse to the Countess of Chateau Briant, who was going to her house in the country for change of air, in her way home to her own village.

She was supposed to call on him for advice, and a chaise from the Countess soon after took her up, and carried her to the house in the wood, where all fears of a discovery entirely subsided.

My father added, that a packet had been delivered to him from the Countess, containing a large sum of money for our support, which we should find difficult to conceal, or carry about us ;—that the physician had told him “ he had also received a handsome present from the same lady, for services that he considered only as a duty, to preserve an innocent victim to the crimes of others ;—that, however reprehensible the situation of the Countess might appear to the rigid moralist, and certainly could not
be

be defended, she had much generosity and humanity in her heart, and had abundant reason to hate two women, who were her determined enemies.

“To both causes my father might ascribe the interest she had taken in his misfortunes, and the pity she felt for an unfortunate young girl, likely to be deprived of every thing valuable in life, and subject to universal contempt.”

“We are now (concluded my father) like the first pair in Paradise, driven to wander over the face of the earth, without a home, or friend to help us.”

The following day we left the house in the wood, invoking blessings on its kind owner. The sorrow that was settled in my father's heart, and the anxiety which he had felt when in confinement on my account, had so greatly weakened his health, and injured his constitution, that to walk much was impossible, we therefore now and then indulged

indulged ourselves with a stage or two in a carriage. It was my father's intention to have crossed the Pyrenees, and reside for some time on the confines of Spain. Our journey was long and tedious, as it was made mostly on foot, and, until we came to the Pyrenees, and the last village on the South side of the mountains, my father had not altered his garments ; we travelled as an old woman and her son.

In this village, by a little contrivance, he procured some men's apparel, with a few necessaries for me. Coming over the mountains, we descended into a little valley, beneath a hill, thick planted with trees, and here found a small hut, that seemed not long to have been uninhabited, though evidently not at present occupied.

The situation so remote, yet pleasant, and at no great distance from the village, pleased him extremely. He asked me if I could like to reside there ?

“ If

"If he was free from danger, all places were *alike* to me."

He then resolved to rest for a time in this retirement. We passed the night in the hut, not worse accommodated than many a night before, for we did not often enjoy the luxury of a bed in our travels, partly from fear, but chiefly because the bye-roads we took did not present us with such indulgencies. We had learned not to be fastidious.

The following day we went back to the village, inquiring to whom the cottage belonged; fortunately a peasant told us, he had long supplied a sort of a hermit with necessaries there, but that, about two months ago, he had left it, and gone to reside in a convent.

As no one seemed to claim any property in this hut, my father was resolved to take possession. He employed a person to make
it

it habitable, had another room added to it, and such necessaries as we should want. The peasant agreed to call on us two or three times a week, to supply us with such food as the village afforded; but in a short time, from the stocking of a little garden, and the produce of a few hens, our wants from thence were very small.

My father's whole employment and delight was in cultivating my mind; and, having him constantly attending to me, I acquired more knowledge in the course of five years than would have been taught me in eight, had I continued in a convent. By means of the peasant, he procured some books from the neighbouring monastery and the priest of the village, who would have visited us, but that he absolutely declined.

When I was employed at my needle, or little domestic affairs, he used to amuse himself in writing all those particulars I have now been tracing to you. What agonies
have

have I witnessed ! how many days and weeks has he talked incessantly of my dear ill-fated mother !—Every evening he used to ramble by twilight for an hour or two, that he might indulge his sorrows alone ; every circumstance relative to her was so often repeated, so often read to me, that every word is engraved on my heart.

Sometimes he would talk of quitting our solitary hut, of placing me in a convent, and of offering his services in the army of a foreign prince ; but I had contracted a strong aversion to a monastic life, nor could I bear the idea of being separated from him,—the only being in the world who felt any interest for me. Thus the last year was spent in forming many plans, and in rejecting all. I was then seventeen. The fatal evening when he rambled so far, lost in thought, and regardless of the time,—*that* night was the last of my happiness. Subsequent events robbed me of the best and tenderest of fathers, the most respectable and unfortunate

fortunate of men, and by means so terrible, that the horrible moment can never fade from my memory, nor permit me to enjoy future comfort.

Thus, madam, have I related to you the sad events that have thrown me on the world, without a friend or relation to protect me, under the most suspicious circumstances, and till now chained down by a solemn oath from revealing my name or family.

The death of the Countess of Angoulême has dissolved the obligation, and you cannot wonder, that the detested name of the Baroness de Foulanger should have so greatly affected me,—*she* whom I look upon as the murderers of my mother, the destroyer of my father's fame, happiness, and eventually of his life also!—The coldness of my heart towards her may be well accounted for; the ill offices she has done me, her baseness and duplicity, correspond with her former character,

racter, and prove that a depraved heart, and vicious mind can scarcely ever be reformed by time or punishment.

How she came to be banished to the Pyrenees, or any circumstances relative to her, I am an entire stranger to; nor can any advantage be produced to me now from assuming my real name. My father's innocence, any more than the guilt of the Baroness, cannot be proved by my single attestation. I know not if our preserver, the physician, or the generous Countess, still exist; the character of the latter, and the general dislike, which I have heard my dear father say the public entertained against that lady, rather militate against me; therefore no benefit can arise to me from the discovery of my birth, and should that horrid woman know me for what I am, her hatred would be ten-fold increased, and I might still feel the effects of her diabolical disposition.

To

To your humanity and compassion, madam, I am indebted for the only pleasurable moments I have enjoyed since the death of my beloved parent. Deign to advise, and direct me; I have no longer an aversion to a convent, though it is not my preferable choice, but misfortunes like mine can hope for no other asylum. All the subsequent events that have befallen me since the night that I was carried off by the robbers, you are acquainted with.

Donna Isabella, the sister of Don Felix, promised to be my friend: why I have not heard from her I know not. The good hermit in the mountains told me, if in want of an asylum, to apply to his friends. What am I to do?—Direct me, dearest madam: your counsel shall decide my future destiny.

Your affectionate and grateful

ADELAIDE.

The Marchioness de Gusman read the memoir of Adelaide with an equal portion of horror, indignation, sorrow, and compassion. Her detestation of the Baroness increased every moment, and she lamented that a woman so covered with crimes, and capable of such abandoned atrocities, should still stalk about the world, to scatter fire-brands, and destroy the innocent.

But (thought she) the day must arrive for severe retribution. Poor wretched woman! what must be her sufferings when the angel of death shall summon her to leave this world! Alas! in vain she may call for the mountains to cover her; they cannot expunge her crimes; and the terrible recollection of an ill-spent life,—the wrongs she has done to the innocent and unoffending, will rise in horrible array before her in that dreadful moment to overwhelm her with despair.

The

The recollection of the misery this unprincipled woman had brought upon her, now rose forcibly to her view, and she sat for some time buried in thought, and forgetful of the hours that she had passed in absence from the unfortunate and interesting Adelaide. She was startled from her reverie by the entrance of her woman, with letters from her brother the governor.

Hearing that the Countess le Marr, (once Baroness de Foulanges,) with Don Felix, had taken the road towards her castle, he was apprehensive of some new plan to the disadvantage of his young favourite; he therefore entreated his sister to watch cautiously over her steps, and never to permit her strolling out alone, lest she should again fall into the power of those who had evil designs against her. He added, that he was informed Donna Padilla was out of all danger, if not nearly well; that her servants were making preparations for a journey, and

it was rumoured she intended going to France, without returning to Estella.

When the Marchioness had read her letter, she carried an inclosure to Adelaide, whom she found in her own apartment, weeping over a picture. She hastily dried her tears, and advanced to meet her protectress.

“Pardon me, my dear child, (said the Marchioness,) for thus rudely leaving you to indulge unavailing grief. I have been so deeply engaged in perusing your interesting melancholy narrative, that the hours passed unheeded. I hope, my sweet young friend, the misfortunes of your life end here, and that you will consider me as the mother, Providence has selected to restore to you peace and happiness.

“I do not bid you forget past afflictions, nor cease to remember the dear friends heaven has been pleased to recall from a world that abounds with evil, and is productive of much heart-felt misery.—But I would have
you

you rejoice, that, by that unerring hand which so frequently raises the forlorn sufferer from the depth of despair to hope and comfort, through the machinations and wicked designs of your worst enemy, you have been conducted to a friend, a mother, who will ever most tenderly cherish you, and that the same kind Providence through you has diffused a degree of consolation to my mind, which I thought it impossible ever to attain.

“ Thus let us bow in grateful reverence to heaven, nor presume to murmur at events which, however productive of sorrow to us, must no doubt have been ordered for the supreme advantage of those we lament,—otherwise, the good, and virtuous, would not suffer in this world, nor the wicked triumph; but that the world beyond this, the eternal world, makes a glorious and just retribution and reward to the one, and a fearful condemnation to the other.”

“ My dear friend and mistress, (cried the grateful Adelaide, tears of sweet sensibility stealing down her cheek,) how soothing is your kindness, how delightful the name of mother !”

“ Here, my love, (said the Marchioness,) is a letter for you from my brother : I leave you a few minutes to peruse it ; only let me say, no discovery of your birth, no rank to which you are entitled, can raise you in my estimation : I love you for yourself,— your virtue, disposition, and sweetness of manners ; it is in the mind that true nobility is seated ; it is virtue that dignifies the soul : possessed of these, you wanted no other claims to my affection and respect ;— hereditary rank is of small value in my eyes, though, in the general view, it may place virtue in a more conspicuous light ; but it is degraded below the poorest peasant, when covered with crimes, or debased by meanness of principle.

“ Such was the distinction I made between you and that odious Countess, before
fore

fore I had learned that you were her equal in birth."

The marchioness withdrew, and left Adelaide to the perusal of her letter. It was replete with the most polite and kindest regards, repeating his caution to her respecting the malicious Countess, with offers of service, in every shape that she would condescend to employ him in, as perfectly devoted to her wishes, without the least interested view for himself. He congratulated his sister on the acquisition of such a charming friend, and assured her that *her* happiness was his first wish independent of his own.

She was charmed with the style of this letter; it was the kind anxiety of a brother, and the generous interest of a friend: it seemed written with ease, and free from that particular tenderness, or distress of a rejected lover, and therefore gave her infinite delight.

“Now (said she) I am at liberty to acquaint this generous man with my whole story: the painful reserve I have been compelled to wear is no longer necessary. He will pity my misfortunes, and do justice to my sincerity. Oh! that my heart spoke in his favour, that I could reconcile myself to the idea of being his wife!—but that wayward heart revolts against a situation reason tells me I ought to approve.”

She sighed at the imperfection of her nature, and could not assume sufficient resolution to conquer her feelings, though conscious that she must appear insensible and ungrateful.

Displeased with herself, poor Adelaide met her dear Marchioness with a humid eye, and an expression of uneasiness that clouded her sweet countenance more than usual.

Her friend supposed the apparent sorrow to arise from a different cause; and, willing to

to divert the current of her ideas, said, "I have not told you, my dear Adelaide, that I well knew your lamented parent,—that I was at court on his first introduction, and was among the number that were charmed with his person and address.

"The first moment I saw you, your features seemed familiar to me, though I could not remember where I had seen the resemblance. Your ill-starred mother I never saw, having quitted the court of Francis the same year the Count de Beauvais returned to it. A lady, with whom I corresponded, wrote to me of the very extraordinary affair which had deranged and astonished the whole court.

"The Count de Beauvais had fallen in love with the Countess of Angoulesme, and, to get rid of his wife, had sought by various intrigues to introduce her to the king, whose passion for beauty was well known: from what cause it proceeded could never exactly be ascertained, but it was supposed Louisa had rejected his suit, which

enraged him, or had inflamed his mind against his wife, for some particular circumstances, as she had been teasing him to leave the court. In short, a thousand vague conjectures were formed, without any probable conclusions drawn, to account for an affair so truly shocking; but that Madam the Countess was absolutely poisoned, and that with the strongest presumptive proofs, by her husband: the consequence was, his imprisonment and condemnation, which, with his remorse, threw him into a fit of insanity, in a paroxysm of which he had forced himself through the window of his prison, and was drowned."

She concluded the shocking story by saying their only daughter was by order of the king sent into a convent. The name of the Baroness was not mentioned, perhaps in tenderness to me.

This lady unfortunately died in a lying-in, a few months after she had written to me,
and

and from that hour I have heard nothing of the French court. The long illness and death of my dear husband, with other events equally afflictive, have entirely detached me from the world; but for your sake, my dear Adelaide, I will not so entirely seclude myself as I have done.

“ You have already (added she, smiling,) made a great talker, for I have spoken more within the last two days than I have for several months together. The tongue is an unruly member, and, when once set a going, like a wheel fresh oiled, and put in motion, proceeds with a velocity difficult to stop. You will pardon me, therefore, dear Adelaide, if I forget myself, and intrude upon you.”

She made a suitable return to this kindness, and then reverted to the letter she had received, describing her feelings with much frankness.

“ My

“ My brother (said the Marchioness) is a most worthy man, but there is a difference in point of age between you, that could afford him but little hope that you would accept of his hand; and, if I know his heart, I believe he never had entertained an idea of marriage, but from motives of admiration for an amiable and unfortunate young person, whose merit he discovered under all the oppression heaped upon her, and whose delicacy would have rejected any pecuniary assistance from an indifferent hand.

“ He loves you, my dear Adelaide, but he respects you more for your refusal of him, because, in your circumstances, to decline such an offer, proved a nobleness of mind that demanded admiration and esteem, I am convinced, though his happiness must have been insured by your acceptance of him, yet that he has sufficient generosity to be satisfied, if you can derive peace and future comfort from the hands of his sister, and honour both with your preferable regard.”

The

The susceptible heart of Adelaide was deeply penetrated by such unexampled goodness. She pressed the hand of her benefactress to her lips; tears of gratitude springing to her eyes, "I have no words, madam, to express my sentiments; read my heart,—it is all your own."

She retired to write to her worthy friend, having requested the Marchioness to transmit her manuscript, without delay, to her brother. She was anxious that her whole story might be before him, and her limited confidence be justified by the necessity imposed upon her.

She hoped she should hear no more from the detested Baroness, or her companion; and besought his assistance to convey a letter to Donna Isabella, as it had sometimes started to her mind, that a woman capable of such duplicity as the Countess le Marr (for such was her present title) might have bribed her servant, and intercepted her former

mer letter." Of Don Felix she had not the smallest suspicion, but considered him as an admirer of the ladies, and a dissipated man of gallantry, such as she had heard described, but had never been in the way of personally knowing.

The Marchioness now considered her as her adopted child, and resolved to break through the solitude she had been emerged in, by sending for masters to cultivate the genius, and finish the education of Adelaide. All possible knowledge, that a sensible well-informed man could convey in theory, she derived from the instructions of her late dear father: he had taught her every science that laid within the limit of his power, and stored her mind with sentiments of virtue and integrity that supported her through all her trials.

Few young creatures of her age were so well informed, for her father's lessons had been her chief delight and only amusement ;
but

but she wanted the polish of the world, and her natural graces to be improved. When in the convent she had learned dancing and music, but she was young, and the years she had spent in retirement and sorrow had left few traces on her mind of either.

The generous Marchioness was eager to have her instructed in those little accomplishments which add grace to virtue, and obtain the admiration of the world in general, who form their judgment on superficial acquirements, without investigating the superior attractions of the mind.

Masters of all kinds were soon procured where no expence was spared, and Adelaide felt it her duty, to be most diligent and attentive, to reward the kindness of her good friend.

Near a month passed in equal delight and improvement. She grew dearer to the Marchioness every hour: she had received
a most

a most kind and flattering letter from the governor ; he undertook to forward a letter to Donna Isabella ; he had also written to some persons at Paris, to inquire into the state of affairs there, and learn if the Countess of Chateau Briant, and the physician were living, and whether any thing had transpired relative to the innocence of the Count de Beauvais.

Some particular affairs in his government detained him at Estella, but he hoped soon to wait upon them, and prevail with them to return on a visit to him, where Adelaide might receive still-greater advantages from an acquaintance in polished society.

Thus happily the days rolled on, and our fortunate heroine began to taste that tranquillity and ease she had never expected to enjoy ; she could not forget the cruel events that had deprived her of parents so amiable and respectable : her bosom daily heaved with sighs,—tears frequently stole down her cheeks

cheeks when alone, and permitted to indulge them ; but she thought it her duty to suppress every appearance of sorrow before the Marchioness, who, by continual endeavours to please and amuse her dear child, sought to remove all painful recollections from her memory ; and, in procuring happiness to her, in some degree, felt it reflected on herself.

Adelaide, who found herself treated with the most affectionate and unreserved tenderness, could not repress some little vexation and regret that she was not deemed worthy of her friend's confidence. The Marchioness had said, the Countess le Marr, when Baroness de Foulanger, had been the cause of all *her* misery ; how was it then that she never revealed to her what those causes were which had produced such melancholy effects ? The son she lamented, her woman had unwarily said, was *not dead* ; was it possible to feel superior sorrow than what death could inflict ?

The

The more she reflected on this painful mystery, the more she was lost in vague conjectures, and had no way of accounting for the strict secrecy observed, than to believe there must be a similar obligation to what had limited *her* confidence, though why, or in what manner, imposed, she could not divine.

It was the custom of Adelaide to rise early, and, if the weather was favourable, walk in the gardens; if wet, or windy, she devoted her hours to study. The Marchioness did not always accompany her, for she sometimes took her chocolate in bed; and, if at a late hour, her young friend then joined her at her toilette. Beyond the gardens she never walked alone; but no idea of any danger there arose in the minds of either, and indeed they believed the Countess satisfied with her young and gallant companion, had ceased to trouble herself about Adelaide, and Donna Padilla going abroad, would have new plans, and most likely

likely form new attachments. Both ladies therefore had almost bid adieu to fear, and rested in security from any apprehensions of either.

One morning, as usual, she took a walk, —a book in her hand, and strolled round a small wilderness of flowering shrubs, and seated herself on a bench made in a kind of alcove at one end of it. She had not been there long, before she heard some faint groans ; at first she started,—then listening supposed that her fancy had deluded her, and that it was only the wind rising and murmuring through the trees.

She resealed herself, and in a few minutes the same weak moaning voice reached her ears a second time. Convinced now that it was some human being in pain, who was not far distant, she rose quickly from her seat, following the sound through the shrubbery at the back of the alcove.

Still

Still she heard repeated faint groans, which, though she advanced, did not seem nearer to her than when in the alcove. She stopped a moment, when near the gate that terminated the gardens, and opened into a wood, hesitating whether she should proceed, or run back for assistance: a fresh groan, more expressive of pain, excited her humanity, and, going hastily to the gate, she exclaimed loudly, "Is any-one there?—has any accident happened?"

"Whoever you are, (answered a weak voice,) help me instantly, or I die!"

Adelaide, without recollecting how little capable she was of rendering assistance, exerted all her strength to draw back the massy bolts that fastened the door, which, at another time, she would have thought it impossible to attempt, and with much difficulty succeeded. On opening it, she looked carefully round, and saw a man lying at the foot of a tree. Again she stopped, but, before she had determined whether she

she should advance or retreat, three men darted from behind, seized, and gagged her in the same instant, before she had the power to utter a single cry, though she was too far from the house to have been heard, had they not taken that precaution. The man on the ground sprung up, and between them she was hurried through the wood to a small ruinous hut at the end of it, and at the foot of a high hill.

Here they released her from the gag, but she was so hurt by it, so terrified, and exhausted, that she was incapable of articulating a single word. She was led through this miserable place to a small cavity in the mountain, from whence issued a rill of water, that they obliged her to wade through, almost bent double; but, after advancing a few yards, the passage widened, and, turning on one side, a tolerable spacious cavern appeared: several fragments of the rock served for resting places, and here she was seated, still silent, and apparently deprived
of

of all sensation, her eyes only moving with a vacant stare of terror and surprise.

One of the men, throwing off his flapped hat, and removing a bandage from his face, that had effectually disguised it, now approached her with a small bundle and a paper of sweetmeats.

“Charming Adelaide!” said he,—The voice like an electrical shock seemed to recall her to instant life: she turned her eyes full upon him, and beheld Don Felix.

“Holy virgin! (exclaimed she,) do not my senses deceive me?—is it Don Felix?”

“Yes, my lovely angel, it is Felix, the *happy* Felix, now he is possessed of Adelaide. Fear nothing, my charmer; your continuance here will be short, only till we can proceed without danger, and then I will take you to a house where you shall reign sole mistress,—where every delight that love and fortune can procure will be at your command,

command,—far superior to what a prim, starch Don Lopez can offer, or an unpleasant humiliating dependence on the caprice of women could possibly afford to you.—Yes, my charmer, (added he, snatching, and kissing her hand,) henceforth you will be the entire mistress of me and my fortune.”

The astonished Adelaide heard him with such evident marks of surprise, such wonder and incredulity, that, when he stopped, and found she made no reply, he thought it necessary to repeat much of his foregoing speech with additional raptures, and concluded by clasping her in his arms.

This action at once restored her to comprehension and words.

“What mean you, sir? (said she, indignantly pushing him from her;)—how can this cruel and shameful conduct be reconciled with your professions?—How comes it

that till now you never avowed your love for me, and now only, when you have basely torn me from my friends?"

"My dear creature, (returned he,) I have loved you from the first hour I saw you. I attached myself to the vain Countess merely to blind her jealousy, and gratify that self-love which could not endure the preference given to a young and beautiful rival under her protection.

"But do not believe, my sweet Adelaide, that I would give you up to a man both in age and disposition so unworthy of you as the governor. He has played a deep game, and made his sister subservient to his schemes; but, now that I own *my* attachment, I think I may, without flattering myself too much, pretend to hope, that I have better pretensions to your favour, and that you will find no difficulty to discriminate between us as justly as I can wish."

The

The understanding of this inexperienced young creature seemed suddenly enlightened. She heard him with every indication of contempt, strongly marked in her expressive countenance, and, turning her eyes full upon him, she said, in a calm cold manner, that stung him to the heart :

“ It was impossible for me to divine that, under the warm attachment you professed for the Countess, you concealed such a passion for me as you now describe ; nor can I see what end it was to answer :—a hundred times I have heard you declare you was your own master, independent of your father, and obedient only to the king, who had nothing to do with your domestic arrangement. How comes it then that you were *afraid* to avow this ardent love for me?—what had *you* to fear from the Countess?—Had you not an undoubted right to select whoever you thought calculated to make you happy, as your wife, without being answerable to her ? Certainly,

“sir, you must allow your conduct has been very strange; I do not at all comprehend such contradictions.”

“Because, my dear creature, (said he, recovering from a momentary confusion,) you are a perfect stranger to the world;—you know not how often we are obliged by certain circumstances to disguise, and act contrary to our real sentiments.”

“I know indeed but little of the world, (returned she,) and to you, sir, I am obliged it seems for much information; but allowing there were existing circumstances to which I am a stranger, that induced you to observe a studied system of deceit, what motive compelled you to follow the Countess, when you made that strange abrupt visit to the Marchioness?—why was *she* to be kept in ignorance of your attachment, or wherefore was it necessary to plan such a deceptive scheme, to drag me from my amiable friend, and thus force me into the bowels of the mountain merely to hear a declaration

declaration of your love, which, according to your own ideas, confers honour upon me, and therefore surely might have been openly avowed before my friend the Matchioness?"

"This is not a place, or a fit time, (replied he briskly, but evidently confused,) to answer such a number of interrogatories, or explain the motives by which I have been governed. When once we are safe from pursuit and impertinent meddlers, I do not despair of giving you perfect satisfaction, as to the apparent contradiction you complain of. Mean time assure yourself, my dear Adelaide, that your happiness shall be my first care, and that in a short time you will thank me heartily for adopting such schemes as now appear to you reprehensible."

She made no reply, but a look of scornful incredulity: indeed, the more she heard, and the more she considered, the more she was astonished at his conduct and duplicity.

The little passing attentions, the few gallant speeches he had snatched opportunities of saying to her, when by chance they met alone, she had considered merely as the gallantry of the moment, without letting them dwell on her memory, and his attachment to the Countess admitted of no doubts.— Not a thought, therefore, had ever entered her mind that he had been at all concerned in any thing relative to her, much less could she have suspected that he would contrive schemes to spirit her away from a situation he had seen was the object of her choice.

The whole was incomprehensible and base in her opinion, and she equally feared and detested him. To escape at present was impossible: in that cave neither prayers nor screams could be heard, and she was sensible that to irritate him would not be for her interest. Providence had graciously delivered her twice from the most imminent danger, she therefore earnestly addressed herself to that Divine Being, who never for-
fakes

fakes those that confide in his goodness, and endeavoured to compose her thoughts to bear with fortitude the evils she could not avoid.

While all this was passing in her mind, Don Felix was surveying her with a fixed attention. He saw the hurry of her spirits subside, and her features recover a more placid and serene air. He then besought her to take some refreshment: she took some sweetmeats, but refused his cordials.—The men who had assisted in bringing her there had been out; they now returned,—drew Don Felix aside, and whispered him: he gave answer in the same way, and Adelaide heard not a word that passed on either side.

They were habited like mountain-peasants, and had some tools in their hands, when they came in, which she supposed had been left concealed in the ruined hut

when they accompanied Don Felix to watch for her.

She took no notice of the circumstance, nor had she yet condescended to ask him any questions relative to the Countess, or in what manner he had formed the plan that had so effectually answered his purpose. He attempted two or three times to take her hand, which she coldly withdrew from him, and heard his professions of a violent attachment for life without making any reply, till, tired and mortified at her taciturnity,

“ Surely, my dear Adelaide, (said he provokingly,) you are a little ungrateful, not to thank me for the pains I have been at to establish your happiness. Without vanity, I have better claims to your heart than the governor, who was cunningly leading you to his wishes, by inspiring you with an idea of his chivalry and generosity, when he was only seeking his own gratification.—

You

You cannot certainly be weak enough to imagine he would really marry you."

The native pride of Adelaide now mounted to her cheeks, her whole form grew animated, her eyes sparkled with indignation.

"However weak and credulous I may appear to you, sir, (said she,) I must tell you, the man you so basely charge with art and selfishness is much superior to any calumny that can be uttered against him. I admire and revere him: to the last hour of my life he will possess my esteem, and, in proportion as I honour *his* character, I must despise his unworthy detractor."

"Upon my word, my little champion, you speak like a heroine, (returned he, in a tone of vexation and insult ;) Don Lopez has been a more fortunate man than I conceived him to be; *he* has succeeded I see, and I have only the honour of coming in second best; but no matter, you will soon

be taught to prefer the younger lover, when once you know your own interest."

There was something in this speech so insulting, so unlike the gallantry of a Spanish officer, that Adelaide felt more humbled and offended than any words can express: she tried to suppress her emotions, but failed in the effort, and burst into tears.

He was instantly affected, entreated her pardon if he had hurt her feelings, execrated his own folly, and again launched forth into expressions of affection and unalterable love;—confessed he was jealous of her regard for the governor, as it was his wish to obtain her preferable affection; and he was assured, that, when once she was in possession of the habitation he designed for her, and felt herself entire mistress of all her wishes, that she would be inclined to do him more justice, and congratulate herself upon his perfect adoration."

In

In short, he spoke like an orator on the subject of his passion, and concluded with the most extrayagant compliments to her uncommon attractions.

When he had exhausted his whole stock of oratory, and seemed waiting for her reply, she very calmly said,

“ Pray, sir, for what purpose am I confined in this miserable place, and when am I to leave it ?”

“ I will be sincere with you, (answered he :) no doubt, when first you are missed, all the environs of the castle will be searched, and every cottager examined, if such a person has been seen. I have contrived to send all such curious persons on wrong directions, and when I learn they have taken the road I intend for them, we shall leave this dreary abode.”

“ What then is become of the Countess le Marr ?—do you intend to take me to her ?”

“Not for empires ! (replied he ;)—she is gone on to Seville, I hope : an express very opportunely overtook us, commanding my immediate attendance at Madrid : she had much inclination to be of the party, but I persuaded her to pursue her intended route, and that I would soon join her at Seville : she swallowed the bait, and I took post to return into this neighbourhood.

“I have had you watched, charming Adelaide, about a fortnight, three days since I arrived ; but your eternal Argus never left you, and I was almost mad to see my schemes rendered abortive. To my great joy, those two mornings past you appeared alone ; I dared not get into the gardens, or risk tampering with the old servants of the Countess, therefore adopted the plan, which, after two unsuccessful mornings, at length was favourable to my wishes,—more so than I hoped for ; I only expected to have been received into the castle as a sick man, and had prepared a story adapted for my purpose, but your courage, in opening the gate,

at once gave me power to secure my prize."

"Heavens ! (cried Adelaide,) what artifice and deceit ! and what rash folly mine to render it successful !"

"Spare such reflections, (returned he :)—you shall have no cause to regret your intended charity any more than I do the anxious hours and much trouble I have had to compass my design. A Spaniard is equally brave, persevering, and amorous : no dangers or obstacles impede him in the pursuit of his wishes, and every wish of mine is gratified now, if my charming Adelaide is but sensible of my passion ; and, let me say, I have amply revenged your cause on the malicious Countess by leaving her, and by a letter which I have written to her, sufficiently mortifying to her self-love, in which I have avowed a passion for another, though careful to afford her no clue to trace the person of her rival."

Adelaide

Adelaide lifted up her eyes to heaven. —
“What deception, what meanness! — (she cried;) — why was all this necessary? — Master of yourself, why should you have thought it requisite to wear a mask, and deceive the Countess? — The governor was open and explicit; he repeatedly offered to marry me in the face of the world, — you know he did.”

Don Felix shook his head with a smile of incredulity.

“What sir, (added she,) do you doubt my assertion, or his honour? — I speak but truth; and if your love for me equals his, what prevented you from making me the same offer, — of seeking to obtain my esteem in the bosom of my friends?”

“All this shall be explained hereafter, (said he, impatiently interrupting her.) — You will be perfectly satisfied when this seeming mystery is developed; mean time think favourably of my love and courage,
for

for no power on earth shall deprive me of my charming prize."—He said this with an air of determined ferocity that awed her into silence.

He went several times to the opening of the cave with much impatience, and a disturbed look ; at length two of the men appeared again ; some whispering conversation passed between them, his countenance cleared up, and evident satisfaction illumined all his features : but he spoke little, now and then offered her refreshments, and regarded her with a look of triumph.

Many hours passed in this manner. The small light, admitted into the cave through the passage where the rivulet ran, began now to give way to a melancholy gloom :—the gentle murmuring of the water,—the hollow sound of distant cattle, and the apprehension of passing the night in such a place, and with such company,—altogether worked

worked upon the imagination of Adelaide, that her whole frame shook with horror.

“ If (said she, in a voice of terror,) if you really have any affection for me, for heaven’s sake take me out of this place; I shall expire with fright if I stay another hour in this dreadful cave.”

“ Do not terrify yourself unnecessarily, (returned he ;) I expect a messenger every moment to give me notice when we may quit it in safety.”

The last word struck her to the heart.—*In safety* thought she!—alas! where can I be safe?—to what abode may my evil genius next conduct me, in this terrible country of mountains, caverns, and designing men? Ah! why did I refuse the worthy Don Lopez?—what must the dear Marchioness think, what must she suffer on my account, and where,—where shall I find a deliverer like the governor!”

A torrent

A torrent of tears followed those bitter reflections. Lost in them she regarded not the impatient movements of Don Felix, till he suddenly caught her by the arm :—
“Come, my angel, come;—we may now venture to travel.”

She made no reply. Trembling and agitated, she permitted him to lead her forth, and again wade through the waters, which, though not deep, wetted her shoes a second time; and, having sat so many hours with them damp upon her feet, she felt the chill seize upon her heart, and an universal trembling alarmed Felix. “These cursed waters have given you cold, (said he,) I beseech you, Adelaide, take some of this cordial.”

The state she was in no longer gave her the power of refusal: she was helped into the dismal ruins, where a torch, held by one of the men, served to discover the disorder of her whole frame. Felix poured some of the liquor down her throat,—had
her

her shoes taken off,—wrapped her feet and whole body in a large great cloke, brought by the men, and in this state, between them, she was carried up the mountain, scarcely respiring, and followed by her ravisher, in a state little short of distraction.

She was hardly conscious of her situation, nor sensible of the distance she was carried: her senses seemed benumbed, and the departing day, succeeded by a few twinkling stars, emitted a light so faint and indistinct, that she could form no idea of the route taken over the mountain, had she been more capable of distinguishing objects.

At length, she found herself lifted into a carriage, Don Felix by her side, who endeavoured to sooth her by a thousand expressions of the tenderest love and admiration, with assurances that she should have no cause to regret the change in her situation, as he would make her rich and independent.

But

But he talked to very little purpose.—His character, and the nature of his sentiments, were now perfectly understood by Adelaide, and her contempt and apprehension increased in proportion to his futile attempts to atone for his late insolence, or inspire her with a confidence in him. She was silent, and, in the anguish of her heart, lifted her eye to heaven, and implored its protection. He kept her wrapped in the large cloke, for she had constant shivering fits upon her, though she did not choose to complain.

They had descended from the mountain, and were travelling through a pretty extensive plain, at the termination of which, at the foot of another hill, stood a solitary hut, where the carriage stopped, but the peaceful inmates of it were buried in sleep.—Repeated knockings brought some one to the door, who demanded the cause of their being disturbed. Don Felix replied they were travellers benighted, who wanted fire with
food

food and rest for their horses. He was told neither could be had there, but that about two leagues farther, crossing the hill, both might be had.

All this passed in Spanish, and was but imperfectly understood by Adelaide, who, though she had been studying the language, had made no great progress; but Don Felix, highly chagrined, explained it to her, expressing his fears that the horses would tire before they could cross the hill.

They were, however, obliged to proceed, for they could obtain no relief there, and he violently execrated his blockheads for not having provided horses on the road. This disappointment, and the slow pace they were obliged to drag, gave Adelaide some faint hopes that they might be pursued and overtaken, but she knew not the precautions he had taken.

The

The men he employed were disguised as labouring peasants, wood-cutters, with all their proper implements in the ruined cottage. During the day that Felix and Adelaide remained in the cave, those fellows were apparently at work in the wood, near the spot, for the purpose of giving wrong information; they were stationed in various directions, and the plot succeeded.

For, after the Marchioness had taken her chocolate, she waited to receive Adelaide's accustomed visit at her toilet, and, finding a considerable time elapse, she sent one of her women to seek her, who, not finding her in the house, proceeded to the gardens, which she traversed round in vain, calling for the young lady at every step, till, at length, she came to the great gate that opened upon the wood; to her infinite astonishment she found it open, and just on the other side of it, a book on the ground, which Adelaide had been reading when so insiduously betrayed.

Extremely

Extremely terrified, she hastened back to her lady, and repeated what she had seen.— The Marchioness hesitated not a moment in concluding that she had been surprised and carried off, and as readily condemned the Countess le Marr for being the base contriver of the plot.

Inexpressibly grieved, she lost no time in assembling her servants, and sending them through different parts of the wood, while she got into her carriage, and went round the neighbourhood.

The servants, as was expected, met with the wood-cutters, and every one, though distant from each other, agreed in the same tale ;—they had seen a carriage drive through with two ladies, a gentleman, and several men attending, and describing their route, there admitted of no doubt but that they were gone beyond Tudella.

With

With this intelligence one of the servants returned to his lady, while the other two proceeded on the road as they were directed, and, by a singular accident, it happened, that, on inquiry at the first stage, they learned a carriage had passed through about two hours before : this confirmed the servants they were right, and they hastened on their pursuit.

The Marchioness sent off an express to her brother, and, though it was long since she had travelled, determined to pursue the infamous woman who had robbed her of her young favourite, and in a few hours she was on the road.

Thus the scheme of Don Felix succeeded, for he had taken a different route ; when, at night, he concluded himself safe, and purposed carrying Adelaide to an estate he had in Arragon, which had been left him by an uncle, and which he had never visited but once, when he took possession, from its being
situated

situated in a barren and mountainous part of the country, with no other neighbourhood for some leagues than two monasteries, one for women, the other for men, and those were divided from each other by a considerable high mountain.

In this spot he designed to seclude Adelaide till he had brought her to his wishes, and then to return triumphantly to Madrid with his prize. He had no idea that a young girl could long withstand the passionate devoirs of a handsome man like himself; he believed, or chose to believe, she was what the Countess represented her, a friendless dependent being, whom he should confer honour upon by his notice.

He laughed at the romantic passion the governor had professed, and could not credit either that he had really made her an offer of marriage, or that she had been fool enough to reject it: judging from himself, he concluded the governor was only playing an artful

artful game, to get her under his sister's protection for a time, till the known melancholy disposition of that lady should grow irksome to a young creature, and the more readily incline her to embrace pleasure and independence.

Such were the ideas he had formed, and on that ground was determined to supplant Don Lopez, and supercede his plans. He really loved Adelaide more than he had ever loved before, and indeed with more passion than he was himself aware of, until he saw her taken ill. His anxiety for her health, and eagerness to have her in a place of security, made him outrageous at finding no accommodations on the road, and that his horses were in danger of being knocked up. Under all this perturbation of spirits, we must leave him to pursue his journey, and look on Adelaide's best friends.

The Marchioness Donna Gusman, who really loved her very nearly as much as she

could a child of her own, pursued the road with all speed that she was informed laid in the same track with the carriage, which she supposed contained the Countess le Marr and her young friend.

They arrived at Tudella without overtaking them, and putting up at the post-house, the Marchioness learned that the ladies were in an adjoining apartment: too much agitated to observe any kind of ceremony with a woman she detested, she burst suddenly into the room, and to her extreme surprise beheld two ladies and a gentleman who were perfect strangers to her.

They were not less alarmed than she was disconcerted at her abrupt entrance. They all gazed at each other: the Marchioness, much confused, stammered out an apology, at the same time asking if they came the road from Estella.

They

They answered in the affirmative. “Did you see any other carriages on the road, ladies?”

“No, madam, (replied one of the ladies,) we did not.—Will you have the goodness to be seated, (added she, much struck with her manner and apparent agitation;) I fear you have met with some disappointment. We only came out of the carriage for a few moments, while fresh post-horses were put to, but we found ourselves obliged to wait longer than we intended —Can we be of any service to you, madam?”

“I fear not, (answered the Marchioness, sitting down, overcome with fatigue and vexation;) a young and very amiable friend of mine has been unwarrantably snatched from my protection, and carried away this morning from my house. From some intelligence gained by the wood-cutters, I had every reason to believe your carriage, which I have traced on the road, contained the young lady I mention, particularly from the circumstance of there being two ladies

and a gentleman; for it is a lady I suspect as the principal person in this cruel business."

"I am extremely sorry, madam, (said the gentleman,) that we were not fortunate enough to meet with the carriage; but, pardon my curiosity, how comes it to be a lady suspected of running away with one of her own sex?—are the ladies related?"

"Not at all, sir, (answered the Marchioness;) but I am sorry to say, that there are women capable of every degree of profligacy, who envy and hate virtue from a conviction of their own unworthiness. I can no otherwise account for the injury this young creature has received, in being stolen in so base a manner from one who knew how to distinguish and admire her worth.

"Heavens! (exclaimed she, in much emotion,) where now shall I seek her, without any clue to guide my search, and so much time lost irrecoverably?"

She

She could no longer repress her tears; the ladies were much affected, and the gentleman seemed to feel great indignation against the unworthy person who had caused her distress.

“If you have only suspicion against the lady spoken of, perhaps it may be wrong to ask her name, for a charge of this kind is a very heinous one; but if, from her preceding baseness, you have a right to suspect her, we are going on a tour through Spain, and if chance should throw us in the way of the ladies you seek, be assured, madam, we will protect the lady, if she will accept of our protection, and you can give us permission to offer it.”

The Marchioness with much politeness thanked the gentleman and ladies for their attention, and told the former she freely accepted his kind offer. She then told him her name and rank, adding, “the young lady, who is my adopted child, is called

Adelaide de Beauvais, born in France : her cruel enemy is also a French lady, and bears the title of the Countess le Marr."

"Good God, madam ! (cried the gentleman, with all the marks of extreme astonishment,) what is it you tell me !—Adelaide de Beauvais !—Is she living under your protection ?—What then is become of her father, or how came this Countess to find the unfortunate girl ?"

"Ah ! sir, (replied the Marchioness,) do *you* then know *my* young friend ?—did *you* then know that respectable unfortunate man her father ?"

At this moment the master of the post-house came in to say the horses were ready.

"Take them off again, (said the gentleman,) we do not go yet."

The man retired. The gentleman, turning to the Marchioness, said, "Yes, madam, I did indeed know that innocent persecuted nobleman, and the detestable vile woman
who

who caused all his misfortunes.—Tell me, I beseech you, does he live ?”

“ Alas ! no, (she replied ;) his death was as deplorable as his life was unhappy ; but pray, sir, tell me who I am speaking to.”

The gentleman without hesitation announced his name ; the Marchioness immediately gave a shout of joy.

“ Is it possible !—do I see the worthy, the benevolent Monsieur St. Amand !—the physician, the preserver of the ill-fated Count !”

“ You see, indeed, madam, the man who thought it his duty and glory to serve a persecuted man. Convinced of his innocence, I did my duty, and obeyed the commands of one, without whose compassion and assistance I never could have succeeded in my wishes.

“ I have a thousand questions to ask, and am impatient to know every thing in a moment. This wretch, this Countess, how

came she to find out this unhappy victim to her crimes?—how long has the Count's daughter resumed her real name?—what has been the deplorable end you talk of?—forgive me, madam, I am really agonised with curiosity.”

The Marchioness, as briefly as she could, recapitulated the events which had befallen the Count de Beauvais and his daughter, after their departure from the house in the wood, belonging to the Countess of Chateau Briant,—his cruel death, Adelaïde's adventures in the mountain, her being recommended to the Countess le Marr, whose change of name had precluded her from knowing the enemy of her house.

She farther continued, that the subsequent machinations of the same woman against an unoffending young creature, and, lastly, this event, which had now overwhelmed her with sorrow, had brought her in pursuit, as she thought, of the Countess and her beloved Adelaïde.

Adelaide, and had occasioned her abrupt entrance into the apartment."

Though she had only slightly run over the story, she had exhausted her spirits, and seemed to regret the time; yet rejoiced (she said) greatly to see that benevolent physician Adelaide had so frequently spoken of with love and admiration.

When she had done speaking, both Monsieur St. Amand and the ladies were deeply affected. The latter, not understanding the Spanish language perfectly, lost many parts of the story, yet heard enough to interest them greatly for the innocent, unfortunate, young woman. The physician, who spoke Spanish like a native, entered warmly into every part of the narrative; he lamented most feelingly the death of the Count, and the unfortunate circumstances, which had thrown his amiable daughter into the power of a fiend.

“For his part, (he said,) he had no doubts upon his mind, but that the Countess must have discovered her, and hence arose that otherwise unaccountable aversion she seemed to have to the young lady.”

“Heaven only knows, (said the Marchioness, rising,) but I feel very miserable in being obliged to return hopeless of gaining any information of their route. She scarcely had spoken those words, before a noise of fresh carriages drew them all to the windows, when, to the infinite surprise and joy of the Marchioness, she beheld the Countess le Marr alighting from a carriage.

“’Tis her!” exclaimed she, darting out of the room.

“The wretch is detected!” cried the physician, following her.

Both were nearly together at the foot of the stairs, and, as the Countess was passing to another room, they both caught hold of her.

“Where

"Where is my Adelaide?—give me my child!" said the Marchioness, in a voice half-choaked by her agitations.

"O shameless woman! (cried Monsieur St. Amand,) can neither years nor punishment bring you to repentance?—where is the daughter of those unfortunate victims to your vices?"

The Countess stood like one petrified, gazing upon each, and struggling to free herself from their grasps, all the people gathering round them.

"What is it you mean?" (cried she;)—who are those you ask for?—how dare you stop and insult me thus?"—Then again, looking at the physician, "Heavens! (exclaimed she,) how came you here, and what means all this insolence?"

"Detestable woman! (cried the Marchioness,) where have you carried my Adelaide?—what have you done with the dear girl?"

"You are all mad! (replied she; then, turning to the master of the house,) "will you permit a stranger to be thus insulted by a conspiracy against her. I demand your aid; refuse it at your peril."

The man was frightened: he began to speak in a supplicating tone, when the Marchioness again demanded Adelaide. "Tell me where I may find Adelaïde, and, wretch as you are, I will leave you to your own conscience."

"Go seek her then with the false ungrateful Don Felix, with her companion in duplicity and wickedness. How dare you to stop, and upbraid me with crimes?—ask me for the false, contemptible, ungrateful girl, who has run from my protection, where she was placed, and, seduced by your arts, and following her own vile ungrateful disposition, has turned a viper to sting her benefactors to death, and has now served you in turn as you deserve?—Go, I say; seek her with her paramour Don Felix. If they exist
above

above ground, I will find them, and then you may again receive the *amiable*, the *virtuous* Adelaide."

The Marchioness stood confounded, when the Countess, turning to the physician,—
"And you, sir, that take those impertinent freedoms, who is it *you* are pleased to ask for? —Do you take me for an enchantress, that carries off captive the divine princesses that walk the earth in disguise, like "mountain-girls" and "pretty peasants?"

"*I know you, madam, for what you are,* (replied he,) for a siren that has lured many a one to destruction. I asked you for Adelaide de Beauvais, for the unfortunate child of those parents your cruel arts destroyed."

"My God! what is it I hear!—cried she;) is it possible!—Adelaide!—can Adelaide du Pont be the daughter of the Count de Beauvais? —Impossible!—Adelaide de Beauvais!"

"Extremely"

“Extremely well acted, (returned he,) as if this was news to you,—*you* whose discernment nothing can escape.”

“You over-rate my abilities much, (replied she, in a tone of voice that denoted surprise and horror,) I never had the smallest idea of her name or birth.—Quit your hold, (added she fiercely :)—by heaven I know nothing of this Adelaide, but have no doubt of her being with Felix. You scarcely deserve to be told that I am this instant come from Saragossa, in pursuit of an ungrateful deceitful man, whom the arts of that hated girl have drawn from me. Oh ! I did not know what double cause I had to detest her !”

She broke from their relaxed hold, and passed hastily into the room. The people all stood aghast, not knowing what to make of this confusion. The Marchioness overpowered by fatigue, vexation, and disappointment, had no longer spirits or strength
to

to support herself: she fell into violent hysterics, which held her for near three hours.

While the ladies were with her, and the physician had ordered something for her to take, the Countess sent for him: he attended her, having previously informed himself that she actually had been travelling all day, and the preceding night from Saragossa, only her woman with her and men-servants.

When he entered the room, she received him with a haughty air. "I remember you, sir, perfectly well in the court of Francis,—the favourite of *his* favourite, I think, (with a smile of disdain;) the court gave you much credit for the influence you had with that lady.

"But, waving that for the present, I request to know how Adelaide de Beauvais, confined by order of the king in a convent for life, made her escape from it, and who that man was, that lived with her, whom
she

she called father, and who she said was murdered?—Was not her father the Count drowned?”

“I am not compelled to answer your interrogatories, madam; but, as I know it will wring your heart, however callous, know that the Count was *not* drowned,—that his life was preserved by a miracle,—that he got possession of his child, and, as I have just heard, lived with her in the Pyrenees.—His untimely death may still be called a sacrifice to your crimes, for who drove him to death and banishment but you?—who deprived his child of her name and inheritance but you? and who poisoned the guiltless wife, and accused the innocent husband but you?”

“Know, madam, and tremble to be told it, that proofs of your crime will soon appear against you, and, were you ever to visit France again, you will share the fate of a criminal.”

“Go then, retire into a convent, make what atonement can be made for your horrid crimes,

crimes, and let the earth be freed from such a monster, who disgraces her sex."

Seeing that she sat motionless with a fixed look of horror, he quitted the room, having spoken daggers to her soul, and returned to the Marchioness.

That lady was now a little recovered, and being convinced that the Countess could not have Adelaide in her possession, she commanded one of her servants to disguise himself, and follow her carriage at some distance, not to be seen, neither to lose sight of her.

She then ordered her horses for returning to her castle. Hopeless and spiritless, she took leave of Monsieur St. Amand and the ladies, who were his sister and niece, and claimed a promise from them of a visit on their return.

"We did not intend (said he) to go back into France by this route, but my anxiety
fo

for your young friend will doubtless bring us to wait on you, and also most likely shorten our tour; for every one feels interested, though she is not known. Doubt not, madam, but I will make the strictest inquiry through all the towns I pass; if she is carried into Spain, they will find it difficult to elude my vigilance, and the steps I shall take to procure intelligence."

They parted with regret for persons who had known each other but a few hours, and left the Countess le Marr behind them:—indeed her person was so hateful to the Marchioness, that it made her shrink with horror, as she would at a basilisk. The servant received his instructions, and, if it was possible that she had deceived them, was in the plot herself, and threw the suspicion on Don Felix, in the hope of gaining time, or misleading them, there was no other way to discover the intended fallacy but by tracing her route.

Much

Much oppressed in spirits, the Marchioness hastened her return, flattering herself that the known activity and former good fortune of her brother might enable him to be more successful than herself.

Knowing the duplicity of the Countess, she did not place much confidence in her accusation of Don Felix ; yet it was rather singular that he should have left her ; then, again, she thought it most probable that both were in the plot ;—that he acted as an agent for her, and might have taken her away, and the Countess was now going to join them ; yet an action so mean and unworthy of a young nobleman, a Spaniard, and a soldier, again puzzled her, and rendered it doubtful.

Lost in such a variety of conjectures, she knew not where to fix her suspicion ; for, not having the most distant idea that the young officer was in the least attached to Adelaide, but decidedly the attendant on
the

the Countess, there appeared no cause why he should have undertaken so dishonourable an action on his own account. Thus, being a stranger to the heart of Don Felix, she had no clue to guide her towards unravelling the mystery that enveloped the destiny of her friend.

But the reader, better acquainted with the secret movements of his actions, will not be surprised to learn that the last interview with Adelaide, her fainting, and the subsequent conversation between the two ladies, after she was carried off, had greatly augmented his love, or rather passion; for *love* is a dignified sentiment of the soul, and must take root in honour and virtue,—must wish to elevate and respect the object of it; but the passion which inflamed Don Felix sought only its own gratification, the debasement and ruin of an innocent unsuspecting young woman, every way entitled to his respect and consideration, from being friendless and dependent.

But

But he was a young man of warm susceptibilities, a spoiled child, unaccustomed to have his wishes contradicted, or any of his pursuits checked by disappointment; he therefore waited not for the direction of prudence, or listened to the voice of honour: those worthy guardians of virtue were silenced, and overpowered by the turbulence of passion.

When he departed with the Countess, his mind accompanied not his person; his thought dwelt on the beautiful and innocent Adelaide; his companion observed his thoughtfulness with chagrin, and, piqued at his silence, she roused him from his reverie by a speech both severe and ironical.

Starting at her words, he presently recollected the spiritless figure he cut with a gay lady, but in the same moment he was going to speak with an assumed air of gallantry, he recollected the scene between her and the Marchioness, and the disorder of Adelaide.

Curiosity

Curiosity got the better of politeness, and he asked her for an explanation of what appeared to him equally rude and incomprehensible.

The Countess, displeased, answered with a peevish disconcerted air, " You don't expect me to account for people's impertinence, I suppose. I know no reason for her insolence to me, but that a foolish boy, a son of her's, took it into his head to be violently in love with me, — committed a hundred mad pranks, — dissipated his fortune, — lost his character, — was guilty of some atrocities that deserved the gallows, and then fled from Paris ; — and all this the wise Marchioness has thought fit to lay at my door. If love made the boy mad, she might as well blame heaven for giving me beauty. I should be in a mighty pretty situation if all the follies of my lovers, or those that chose to call themselves such, were to be fastened on me.

" What

“What had I to do with the excesses of an imprudent young man?—I was neither his guardian nor preceptress; his parents surely were the properest persons to restrain his follies.—And now, sir, that I hope *your* curiosity is satisfied, pray let me ask you in return, what mighty affair seems to have so entirely engrossed you, that you have forgotten the common forms of good breeding?”

“Really, (answered he,) I was wholly taken up with our extraordinary reception at the castle, and Adelaide’s unaccountable behaviour; her fainting, and refusing so peremptorily to attend you,—*you*, who I understood had the care of her, and authority over her.”

“And she shall find I have, (said she, horridly out of humour,) whenever I choose to exert it: she shall find *I have* authority over her, and that she has no right to take any step without consulting me,—*me*, that have acted by her as if she was my own daughter, a little, impertinent, ungrateful, huffey!

hussy!—a stranger to the world, ignorant of common forms, her person, her dress, as slovenly as her mind is depraved.”

“ Hold, hold ! (cried Don Felix ;) don’t let your resentment descend to such mean invectives, lest you give cause to suppose she must have had great provocations to act as she had done, if a tenth part of the favours have been conferred on her you talk of.— My dear Countess, the mind of a young creature, like her, can never be so depraved and wicked as to fly in the face of her benefactress, and even appear shocked at seeing her.”

“ Oh ! you know her not, (exclaimed she ;) she has the most consummate art in the world : she can appear gentle as an angel *when she pleases* ; but I have cause to know her well.”

“ To say truth, (returned Don Felix, who beheld the most violent passion rising and working all her features,) I must own that I think her behaviour to the governor was totally unaccountable,—not that I be-

lieve he thought any thing about marrying her."

"Marry her!" (exclaimed the Countess,) —I believe not. He was once thrown off his guard, and said some such thing to flatter the girl's pride; but, depend upon it, his was neither the passion of a boy, nor the dotage of an old man, and he was artful enough in his proceedings. He has not placed her with his melancholy half-mad sister for nothing;—but let us have done with them for the present.—Some time hence perhaps Miss Adelaide shall know my power over her."

Don Felix readily agreed to drop the subject, though he could not shake it from his mind. He grew cool in his devoirs as they proceeded on their journey; and, by the time they alighted at Saragossa, the Countess was thoroughly provoked.

She had too much art to shew it, or by ill humour to give him a pretence for leaving

THE GIRL OF

her. His attendance was necessary, and she really was so fond of him, that even her former passion for a variety of lovers seemed to give way, and her affections were all centered in him.

“ But, alas ! such is the perverse nature of man, *his* love, or, if you please, his desire of *pleasing*, grew less obvious, as her's was more glaring. She bore frequent inattentions, she was not blind to several of his gallantries in that great city ; but still her passion for him got the better of her pride and self-love, and she submitted to many indignities that wrung her heart, because she would not risk an open breach with him. Thus things went on for some time, during which Don Felix had not been idle in his favourite project.

His trusty servant he sent off in the neighbourhood of the Marchioness, with proper instructions to watch every transaction in the castle. The Countess was taught to believe

lieve Sancho was sent to Madrid on particular business, and when her unfaithful lover received such information as required his presence, he pretended an order from the king obliged him to leave her for a short time, not exceeding a month.—

She entreated to go with him : he told her it would be highly improper. She wept, implored, and insisted, nay even gave some orders for the journey. All was in vain ;—he was peremptory :—“ he was going post, —had regimental duty to attend,— could spare no time to her, and in short *she must delay* her visit to Madrid.”

Knowing the violence and enterprising spirit she possessed, he was fearful that she might closely follow him, therefore he was obliged to qualify his positive refusal, by assuring her of his quick return,—his intention to attend her to Seville, Grenada, and Valentia, and every place worth her no-

tice, when he had got rid of this disagreeable business that called him from her.

She saw he had positively decided against her wishes, and that all further entreaties were fruitless. She was compelled to, acquiesce, though the agonies she gave way to, when the hour of separation came, would have hurt the feelings of some men, less vain and indifferent than her faithless swain, who, in his eagerness to be gone, forgot even to *assume* a regret he did not feel, but left her overwhelmed with tears and faintings.

He hastened on his journey, joined his industrious valet, who had cunningly engaged three men in his intrigue, and had provided every thing that might mislead the friends of Adelaide, and preclude a discovery of their route.

Three days Felix had watched the gardens and grounds without effect, and began
to

to grow impatient, and curse the foolish plan, when, at length, Adelaide went alone beyond her usual walk, and was the victim to her compassion, and a long-concerted scheme for carrying her off. What followed has been related.

The justly-deserted Countess gave way to the most piercing grief. Of all her numberless lovers, the Count de Beauvais and Don Felix were the only ones she had really any inclination for, and the latter had completely triumphed over her long and fatal passion for the Count. A woman of intrigue from her early years, of unbounded spirit, intolerable pride, and most ridiculous vanity, she had ruined the morals of many individuals, and destroyed the happiness of many families;—now she was herself tortured with the most violent attachment to a man of a similar disposition, who felt for her a transient liking, and had only attached himself to her, with a view to gratify his own purposes on another.

When he had left her, all those rageful passions, which her submissive tenderness for him had repressed and confined within her own bosom, now burst forth with unconquerable violence: she raved, tore her hair, stamped, and flew about like a distracted creature. Her woman knew her too well to presume either to speak, or prevent her extravagancies; she let the momentary madness expend its ebullition, till nature could no longer support such extremes, and she sunk exhausted on the floor.

This passion was followed by a stupid melancholy fit for the succeeding day and night, from which she was roused by the entrance of her woman on the third morning after the departure of her beloved;—she came into the room, an open paper in her hand, her eyes wildly staring, and every mark of strong surprise, either real or affected. Her appearance caught her lady's attention.

“What

"What is that paper?" demanded she hastily.

"O my lady, *my* dear good *gentle* lady! that such goodness should be so abused. — O the wicked vile man!"

It is uncertain how long she might have indulged herself with a repetition of ah! and oh! had not the Countess rose suddenly from her chair, and snatched the paper from her hand: her eyes greedily devoured the contents; it was from Sancho to his master, the fragment of a letter.

"The sooner your lordship comes now the better; the men are well instructed and ready to assist: she is daily in the gardens, and, if you once get hold of her, or into the castle, they will be sure to do whatever your lordship will direct."

Such were the few lines on a scrap of paper, evidently torn from a letter, and San-

who's writing was well known to the officious Abigail.

What became of the Countess on reading this proof of Don Felix's falseness ! All that she had felt or dreaded was nothing to the various passions that now took possession of her soul. The conflict was more than she could bear : she fell for a moment motionless in her chair ; her looks fixed on the paper, insensible to the cries and attentions of her woman ; almost choked with the violence of her emotions, it was some time before she could recover strength to speak or move ; and, just as the heavy sighs burst from her overcharged heart, and afforded some relief, a servant knocked, and delivered a letter : it was from Don Felix to her !

Her trembling hands tore open the seal, and there she read the confirmation of all her fears, the destruction of all her hopes.

“ He

“He took a polite, but most frigid leave of her *for ever*!—thanked her for all the favours she had honoured him with,—lamented the instability of men’s affections, which they could neither command nor controul,—confessed his passion for another object, whom he was now going in pursuit of,—and entertained no doubt but the charms of person and mind, so conspicuous in the Countess, would very soon procure her a variety of candidates for her favour, from among whom she might select some fortunate man to supply his absence, and attend her through her desired tour.”

Such were nearly the contents of the letter, though the style was both insulting and ironical, and she felt every word in its full force. It was no longer grief, doubt, or fear, that impelled her; it was rage, madness, and revenge: her passions were up in arms; she sprang from her seat, raved for her carriage immediately.—“She would pursue the traitor, and sacrifice both him

and the witch that had seduced him from her !”

She instantly suspected it was Adelaide. Her servants, accustomed to her violence and hasty commands, were not long in obeying them ; and, without forming any plan, or obtaining any precise information, she set off to trace Don Felix, in the name of the Marchioness de Gusman.

The unexpected meeting with that lady at Tudella, being so suddenly accosted by her and Monsieur St. Amand,—the surprising information that the Adelaide she detested was the daughter of those whom she too well knew she had most cruelly and basely used, — and the incertitude where now to trace Don Felix, since it was beyond a doubt with her that he had carried off Adelaide, and could not be discovered in his route even by the Marchioness, who, being on the spot, had unquestionably made all possible inquiry ;— all these torments operating

operating at once on a mind so headstrong and irritable, with the added terror of the vengeance and discovery of her crimes the physician had threatened her with, threw her into a frenzy fever, and, within two hours after the other parties had left the post-house, she was raving mad, to the infinite vexation of the post-master, who wanted "no sick nor mad people in *his* house."

It cannot be considered as a breach of charity to leave such a woman in a situation so deplorable as would excite pity for a different object. *She deserved it not.*

We left Don Felix and Adelaide crossing a high and dreary hill at midnight, their horses fatigued, themselves almost petrified with cold, and each moment in expectation that the cattle would fail, and the remainder of the night be passed on that uncomfortable spot. Beyond hope, however, they were dragged on, and at length

came to the bottom of the hill, just as daylight began to dawn from the East, sufficient to discover in a narrow valley a few scattered huts, one of which was the post-house.

Here they could have fresh horses, and Adelaide was offered a few hours repose.—She most gladly accepted it; both her mind and body were subdued by terror, apprehension, cold, and fatigue. She was assisted to a sorry apartment, and a worse bed, but she was not then fastidious: she had before now fared full as ill, therefore, without a single complaint, she flung herself down, and, nature being quite exhausted, she almost instantly sunk into a temporary and disturbed sleep.

The active mind represented in frightful dreams the dangers she had passed, and warned her of many more to come. A variety of scenes she passed through in her sleep, and awakened in great terror from believing

believing she saw her father pierce the heart of poor Louis de Pleffis with a dagger, who fell at her feet, sprinkling her with his blood.

Cold perspirations, and a trembling at her heart, for some time hardly permitted Adelaide to be sensible that it was only a dream, and she had too much good sense to be affected by it, so as to form any apprehension of evil from the effects of a vision, the consequence of a troubled mind and weakened frame ; but it recalled to her view some dreadful images relative to her dear murdered parent, and a sigh for the uncertain destiny of Lewis whom she had never ceased to think of but with compassion.

She then reverted to her present situation, her terrible prospects with a man whose daring projects convinced her he would scruple at nothing to succeed in the plans he had determined to execute, and from whom she
had

had every thing to fear. The Marchioness and governor, she was persuaded, would exert all their power to find and rescue her, but hopes of their success were so feeble, that she scarcely indulged them for a moment before she sunk back into sorrow and despair.

Very little refreshed by the unquiet slumber that had closed her eyes, she rose, and tried to open the door: it was fastened on the outside; she knocked loudly; the key was turned, and Don Felix appeared ready to attend her.

“What, sir, (said she,) indignantly, am I your prisoner? do you stand guard over me?”

“Forgive me, dearest Adelaide, (returned he;) this restraint will soon be at an end. Some refreshment is waiting for you, and the carriage is ready.”

She saw it was in vain to contend with him; no one appeared that she could appeal

peal to, or if she had, and the people willing to serve her, he had the power to force her away from such ignorant persons, who were greatly awed by a nobleman and an officer, and little inclined to dispute a point with him, whatever might be their opinions.

Convinced of this, she would not hazard a fruitless attempt, but very quietly attended him. He was charmed by her apparent acquiescence with his wishes, and his redoubled attentions; she partook of his breakfast, and re-entered the chaise without a single objection, though she threw a lingering scrutinizing glance around, to see if any friends were near. Only a few strange faces met her view, who seemed no ways interested about her, or *her* companion.

When in the carriage, she asked the name of the hamlet they had quitted; he protested he did not know.—“Nor what part of the country we are in, nor where this road

road leads to, I suppose, (returned she, with a look of reproach, that confused him a little,) very well, sir; all in good time, your scheme will be developed."

Observing that she looked displeased, he strove, by many apologies and protestations of eternal love and admiration, to soften her anger, and make an interest for himself in her favour. She heard him without any emotion, and the perfect indifference that she observed gave him more concern, as being much more unfriendly to his hopes than if she had been agitated by rage and resentment.

All violences will subside, and frequently terminate to the advantage of the person that raised them, when the succeeding calm takes place; but, in the steady cool indifference, that seems the result of a thinking mind, there can be small hopes of a favourable change, without an entire alteration in the

the existing circumstances that first produced it.

He was no slight observer of the human mind. Constantly in the habits of mixing in the great and gay world, young as he was, experience had done more for him in the investigation of hearts and characters, than could be acquired by theory and book-knowledge in twice his number of years ;—yet who would envy him the acquirements he had made at the expence of virtue, honour, and integrity?—who had perverted an excellent understanding, and many good natural traits in his disposition, by unbounded dissipation, and the indulgence of his passions.

Unhappily Don Felix had met with but too much encouragement from unprincipled women of rank, and too little restraint, in his expences and gallantries, from his father. Unaccustomed to any checks or disappointments, like Cæsar, he had only to see,

fee, and to overcome ; he was therefore strangely puzzled by the unaffected modest indifference Adelaide had shewn to his little gallantries, and the conquest was a thousand times the more desirable, because for the first time there appeared difficulties to conquer ; yet he evermore flattered himself, that, when once she was in his power, his usual eloquence would not fail of its wonted success.

Entirely thrown out of his play by her calm indifference and inattention to his vows, he was totally at a loss to discover in what vulnerable part he should direct his artillery : that human nature was fallible he well knew, and most of all he believed women were easily won, if their predominant passion was once known.

With most of the sex, vanity was the prevailing foible, and to the gratification of that they gave up a hundred other secondary points ; but Adelaide was perfectly free from
that

that intoxicating poison of the mind; she had native pride, such as resulted from the precepts of her father, who strongly inculcated that dignity of ideas inseparable (as he thought) from noble birth.

Possibly, in the age of Francis the First, hereditary honours were supported in general by a dignified line of conduct, and the comparative few, who disgraced their rank by vice and licentiousness, were marked as objects of contempt. We have to lament that succeeding ages, in relaxing from that haughty austere grandeur which characterised the nobility of former times, have taken no pains to discriminate between insolence and meanness: in sacrificing their pride, they have given up their virtue.

By vice, dissipation, and extravagance, they have been driven to the most despicable, and often the most atrocious actions, for which persons in a humble line would be exemplarily punished, while men and women
of

of rank claim the privilege of being infamous from their exalted birth and superiority of fortune.

In the room of holding out an example for imitation, they give only a warning to the lower classes of the people, who are taught to despise the boasted pre-eminence of birth, when attached to the meanest actions and most unwarrantable pursuits; and from hence proceeds all that licentiousness and spirit of equality that causes general disturbance.

When Rome was in the zenith of her glory, her senators were virtuous, her citizens obedient and peaceable. When corruption and vice crept in among the great, virtue and good order fled together. The struggle was long and violent between the Patricians and the people, and the consequence was the fall of that mighty empire which had once given laws to all nations, — the general umpire to contending kings, and whose

whose virtue and integrity were every where proverbial.

What a lesson for succeeding ages, for corrupt statesmen, for dissipated nobility, and for discontented turbulent people!—But to return.

Don Felix had all that haughtiness, self-consequence, and vanity, which formerly were the characteristics of a Spaniard. The behaviour of Adelaide was equally offensive to his love and his pride;—that a little insignificant friendless girl should be indifferent to his person, unmoved by his rank, and the honour which his affection conferred on her, were things so strange, so wholly unaccountable, that, extremely hurt and irritated, he determined on the conquest of her *mind*; as well as that of her person, and every stratagem wit and money could devise were to be employed for the execution of his design.

Without

Without therefore seeming to observe that indifference which so deeply wounded his self-love, he strove to rally his spirits, and proceeded to draw a most animated picture of the delights he prepared for her, and then exulted in the mortification he had given to the Countess le Marr. Here he went too far, for she reproached him with his duplicity, and accused him of ingratitude.

“What! (said he,) do *you* decide against me in favour of a woman who has heaped a thousand mortifications on you! Surely, Adelaide, this is caprice and ill nature.”

“It is neither, (returned she;) I despise and detest the Countess beyond any human being; she has been my bitterest enemy;—but it cannot be said that she is *your*’s. On the contrary, I have witnessed such kindness and attention as demanded gratitude on your part; and the more she will regret your desertion of her, the more it attaches ingratitude and illiberal conduct to you.

“I

"I have been taught to consider the rectitude of *my* own actions, how it becomes *me* to conduct myself according to the principles of honour and integrity, not what others may deserve from me: if they swerve from either, it is my duty to respect myself, and not incur self-reproach, because other people behave unworthily."

"And where have *you* been taught such extraordinary sentiments, such self-denying principles?" he asked, with an air of astonishment.

"In the school of adversity, and by the best of parents, (answered Adelaide;) — I have learned from early misfortunes premature knowledge, seldom obtained but by experience; and the little I *have* seen of the world has imprinted every lesson on my mind, and taught me the worth of the precepts inculcated from the dearly purchased experience of my affectionate preceptor."

"Who, and what was this father you speak of?" returned he.

"Pray,

“Pray, sir, (replied Adelaide, with spirit,) what right have you to interrogate me? —Perhaps, because you think I am in your power, but that power has been acquired by means so injurious to me, that it cannot entitle you to confidence. Return me to my friends, and I have no secrets now that I am obliged to retain, nor ashamed to disclose; but, without that preliminary step, be assured you will know no more of me than you do at present.”

Don Felix was equally surprised and provoked at this lofty steadiness; he was dying with curiosity to know to whom this extraordinary girl belonged, but the previous condition he thought much too hazardous to venture on. Marriage he had no idea of, nor could he for an instant believe her birth would justify a thought that way, were he so inclined; therefore, in returning her to the Marchioness, he should only expose himself, disappoint all his hopes, and afford them matter of triumph, merely to obtain
a confidence

a confidence from whence he could expect to derive no benefit.

While this was passing in his mind, Adelaide heedfully examined his countenance, and from his silence began to indulge a dawn of hope that was soon crushed in the bud, for, turning suddenly to her,

“However I may be hurt by the withholding your confidence, (said he,) I shall not despair of obtaining it some time hence; till then I am contented with knowing that you are the most charming girl in the world, and that I have more cause every hour to congratulate myself on my present success.”

She disdained to make him any reply, nor could she trust to her voice at that moment; for however she seemed to brave her situation, it is certain her mind was deeply afflicted, and her apprehensions extremely distressing;

but to supplicate would avail nothing, and to irritate could answer no good purpose.

They travelled on for some hours at a good rate, merely stopping to change horses, which, after their first disappointment, were always in waiting for them. Scarce any conversation passed, for each seemed occupied by their own thoughts, and but little inclined to talk. At length they entered on a deep and narrow glen, surrounded by high hills, and overshadowed by tall trees, such as are frequent in that wild country, for they were then on the confines of Arragon.

Through this gloomy, and the farther they advanced, barren and uncultivated spot, they proceeded for several miles; and, after ascending a mountain, which terminated the glen on the other side, they beheld a valley thickly sown with trees, though the hills were rocky, bleak, and barren.

Here

Here, as they descended, Adelaide thought she beheld the turrets of a castle peeping from between the trees, as the wind moved them in different directions; nor was she mistaken, for this was the end of their journey, and the castle destined for her residence, until her sentiments should prove more favourable towards her companion.

They were obliged to get out of the carriage at the foot of the hill, for the horses could not pierce through the trees, and in perfect silence they walked a considerable way, often entangled in the underwood, and impeded by the wild branches, that, from age and inattention, were bending almost to the earth.

Adelaide was fatigued, but she scorned to complain: Don Felix offered many apologies for the ruggedness of the road, when he saw she was wearied, and that the distance exceeded what he expected. She only replied, "Apologies for a *premeditated* in-

convenience were unnecessary and insulting."

Another long silence took place, which was unbroken till they came to the high walls that inclosed the building.

They found a ready entrance, for a messenger had preceded them; but the appearance struck terror to the heart of the intended victim; it was more gloomy, more ruinous, and terrific, than the castle of Donna Padilla, and she saw this as the grave of her innocence and happiness, unless heaven interposed to save her:—a short, but fervent prayer was addressed to the Deity, and her heart reposed with humble hope on a gracious Providence.

They entered into a large and exceeding lofty stone hall, with a spiral top, from whence a few casements emitted a gloomy light below, sufficient to direct their way through to a smaller one, and from thence to a large and equally gloomy staircase.— This they ascended, and came into a long gallery,

gallery, that seemed to go round the building, and give entrance to all the apartments on that floor.

Don Felix led her into a noble room, that had been superbly furnished with crimson velvet and gold lace; the latter was much tarnished, but the former was in tolerable preservation; the make of the furniture was so antique, though grand,—the ornaments, though costly, so heavy and gloomily magnificent, that it inspired a kind of reverential horror, such as she had never felt before, and, unable to suppress the contending emotions that overwhelmed her, she sunk on a couch, and burst into tears.

Felix, alarmed at her agitation, was retreating hastily to call for some assistance; forgetful, in the weakness of the moment, that he was an object of greater terror than any that surrounded her, she shrieked out, "Oh! do not, do not leave me here!"

"Dearest Adelaide, (said he, returning,) do not indulge any apprehensions. You are mistress here, and may command what you please. When your needless fears subside, this castle will not prove so melancholy and dismal as may be apprehended, and your continuance here must depend upon yourself."

While he was speaking, she endeavoured to recall her wonted resolution; she cast a timid eye on the surrounding objects, and her first extreme terror began to give way. She shuddered still, but her mind took in another cause for apprehension, and the master of this castle grew more horrible in her ideas than the solitary grandeur that had at first sight oppressed her so much.

"Go, sir, go, (said she faintly;) I am ashamed of my folly in being terrified by inanimate objects, and calling for aid from the author of my distress. Leave me, I pray you,
to

to recover myself. This, I suppose, is to be my prison."

"It will be your own fault (returned he,) if you find it such; for, if you are not the most insensible girl in the world, I will deserve your love, and then you may command every delight that this kingdom can afford.—I withdraw, however, to order refreshment for you."

He left the room, and soon after a decent kind of middle-aged woman entered with wine and biscuits. She spoke not, but by her motions seemed to intimate that she knew they could not understand each other.

Adelaide, who knew but little of the Spanish language, yet thought that *little* might be of service to her hereafter, judiciously let the woman continue in her error, and accepted of what was brought to her, for her spirits required support, and she could not, like many surprising heroines, pass her days

without food, and her nights without rest, for weeks together. On the contrary, though she had not an appetite, she found nature demanded necessary supplies, and she took what she conceived was requisite to answer that demand without any shew of reluctance.

The woman seemed pleased, viewed her with a friendly aspect, and then motioned to invite her into an adjoining apartment.— She followed her, and saw a very noble bedroom, in the same stile of old fashioned grandeur, descriptive of the opulence and antiquity of the family.

She was given to understand by signs this was to be her bed-chamber. With an oppressed heart she returned to the first room, where she found Don Felix was waiting for her.

As their conversation differed very little from their preceding ones, he alternately soothing

soothing and upbraiding her insensibility, and she indifferent to the first, and sometimes retorting and recriminating on the latter. We must leave them mutually dissatisfied, and return to the friends and enemies of Adelaide.

The same evening that the Marchioness de Gusman returned grieved and disappointed to her house, her brother, the governor, arrived, and, when informed of her meeting with the Countess le Marr, and her behaviour, he hesitated not a moment to accuse Don Felix as the projector of the plot to rob them of their young friend.

He trembled at her danger; he knew that young nobleman to be amorous and ungovernable; and, though he believed none but a savage could injure defenceless innocence like her's, yet it was not impossible but that impetuosity of passion and unrestrained libertinism, joined to opportunity and power, might urge him to a de-

perate and infamous attempt that he would vainly repent of, and would involve them all in endless sorrow.

Distracted by such conjectures, he attended but little to the surprise of his sister, who had never thought of Don Felix but as a coadjutor with the Countess, and was extremely astonished when Don Lopez pronounced, with unusual vehemence, some execrations on his villany, and vowed to pursue him throughout Spain.

“What, brother, (cried she,) do you believe the suggestions of that base woman?”

“I do implicitly, (he replied;)—many concurrent circumstances and contradictions that I could not then account for, are now explained; the Countess is duped by him, and our dear Adelaide is a victim to his arts.—But if I live, she shall be found.—Surely never was a young, unoffending, amiable creature so persecuted!”

He

He was earnest to set off directly, though uncertain where to direct his search, but he thought Madrid the most likely place, as in large cities people's actions are more unobserved, and strangers but little noticed.—The Marchioness, on the contrary, supposed he would take a different route, and was more likely to be found in a distant part of Navarre, or Arragon. She depended upon Monsieur St. Amand, she said, for making all possible inquiry on the former road.

“ You mentioned him before, I recollect, (said her brother.)—Who is he, or how is he interested in this business ?”

Without replying, she went out, and in a moment returned with the memoir of Adelaide.

“ Read these papers, (said she,) and your regrets must increase ; but it is fitting you should know our friend for what she is, and in the friendly physician, so often mentioned,

there recognise Monsieur St. Amand. While your horses and servants rest, look over this memoir,—then go, and heaven grant you success !”

“ Oh ! (cried he,) I am impatient to be gone. Permit me to take this with me ; I cannot read now ; I shall send messengers on the different roads ;—but a thought has just started that I will pursue immediately, as a fortunate recollection.”

All further persuasions were vain. The horses were ordered, and the generous governor set off full speed, attended by the good wishes of his sister, though the time that had elapsed gave her many fears that his journey would prove fruitless.

We left the Countess le Marr at the post-house, under the most dreadful of all human calamities, a fever of the brain ; and with the most unfeeling, and least considerate of human beings, a post-master ; whose ideas seldom extend beyond making all possible advantage

advantage of his cattle, and imposing on the credulity of the traveller.

The master of this house was by no means deficient in such necessary abilities, and when, to his infinite vexation, he found the lady could not be removed, the next thing was to inquire into her circumstances, and how far he could reconcile an appearance of humanity with his own interest.

The lady was entirely deranged; her woman understood not a single syllable in the language of the country. Antoine, her footman, had picked up a few trifling words, and the post-master knew just as much French as enabled him to bargain for his horses, and adjust that sort of business.

The gentry, who had left the house, seemed to accuse the Countess with crimes, but, as their chief conversation had passed in French, he knew little more than that they were all very angry, and that she was
ill

ill in consequence of what had passed. He had then no resources for information, but what he could derive from Antoine's imperfect account, "that his lady was great and rich,—that she was going to a great Spanish lord,—and that the gentry, who had frightened his lady, were all wicked people, and her enemies."

This was but little satisfactory, but, as he understood that she was rich, and assured that she had plenty of money, he began to relax from his ill-humour, and sent a messenger to bring a surgeon, who, on his arrival, and after attending his patient, declared her to be in a very dangerous state.

She raved incessantly on Don Felix, Adelaide, the Count and Countess of Beauvais,—accused herself of murder,—screamed as if she saw ghosts,—and, in short, spoke too plainly the disorder and terror that, from the state of her mind, affected her head.

Happily

Happily the surgeon understood but little more of the French language than the post-master, and therefore formed no conjectures, or suspicions, from the incoherence of her exclamations ; but her woman, and Antoine, were too well acquainted with her history, not to know there was method in her madness, and were extremely alarmed for the consequence of her ravings.

Four days she continued in this dreadful state, without intermission. The fifth she had some paroxysms of reason, but they were short, and very oppressive. The sixth morning the disorder seemed to abate of its violence, and settle into a gloomy silence, from which the surgeon pronounced either a speedy recovery, or a fixed melancholy for life.

About noon, a carriage with several attendants arrived at the house, and were obliged to wait some time for post-horses.—Mittand, the Countess's woman, passed the
room

room where a gentleman and two ladies were seated. A sudden exclamation made her turn her head more fully towards them, and she beheld Don Diego, his lady, and Donna Isabella, the father, mother, and sister, of Don Felix.

Surprise arrested her steps for a moment, and before she had determined whether to address them or fly, Donna Isabella hastily advanced.

“Ah! mademoiselle, (cried she,) what, is your lady here?”

Mittand was so suddenly applied to, that all subterfuge or evasion was impossible.—

“Yes, madam, (she replied, in evident confusion, adding in a stammering way,) and she is very ill.”

“Ill (repeated Don Diego, who now drew near to them) in this place!—Is she accompanied by any but her own family?”

“No, signior,” replied she.

“Where

“Where is Mademoiselle Adelaide?” demanded Isabella.

“Indeed I know not, (answered she, colouring, and confused,) but I must hasten to my lady.”—And then, before they could say another word, she glided hastily by them up-stairs.

“They were all surprised. “There appears something odd and mysterious in this woman’s manner, and in the account she gives respecting the Countess, (said Don Diego;) I am desirous of better information.”

The ladies were not less curious, and the post-master was sent for, and interrogated. Every occurrence that had fallen within his observation he related minutely, and to their great astonishment they learned Adelaide was not with her protectress. They desired Antoine might be called: he was no where to be found; and, just as they were consulting about waiting on the sick lady, Mit-
tand

tand came hurrying towards them, wringing her hands, and screaming, "Oh! we are undone!—My poor lady is robbed, ruined, and we are left to starve in a strange country!"

They instantly demanded the cause of her exclamations.

"My lady's strong box, her money, her jewels, her letters, and all, are gone! The box cannot be found! My lady is robbed, and here I am left without money or friends. —O holy virgin, what will become of me!"

The post-master thought her mistress was dead, and began to curse his unlucky head for letting them stay in the house. When Don Diego explained to him what the woman said, he flew about like a madman.

"A likely story truly, that she should be robbed in his house. They were a parcel of cheats, and had imposed upon him, and made him send for a doctor too, and now the

the expence would fall upon him. No doubt the gentlefolks who scolded at her had been cheated also by such adventurers, but they should stay no longer in his house; she and her baggage should all troop together, and he would soon make her rise and get out of her vagaries and sham madness, and that directly too."

All this was uttered with such rage and rapidity, that it was impossible to stop him, but, when he was about to run upstairs, Don Diego laid hold of him.

"Stop, (said he,) do not be so inhuman; let me inquire into this business. I will give you my word that you are mistaken: I know the lady, and will myself be answerable for whatever debts she may have contracted here."

The man, however violent, was not deaf where his own interest was concerned. The words of Don Diego calmed him in a moment;

ment ; he was again the humble and the compassionate being who lamented the poor lady's misfortunes, and began coolly to ask Mittand to explain to the signior all she had to say.

Without attending to him, whose broken French she did not understand, she was loudly calling for Antoine, when one of the stable men, who resided in the house, and was acquainted with the name, came forward, and told his master that the footman had gone away at break of day on horseback, as he understood, to fetch the doctor.

This information explained the whole business ; the doctor had been to visit his patient in the morning ; he had said nothing relative to Antoine, nor had any one sent him on such an errand. He was the only one who knew of the strong box and its contents, besides Mittand ; and, being obliged to have recourse to it to get some necessaries for her lady, she had first missed it,

it, on going up stairs, a few minutes before.

Convinced now that Antoine had carried off the box, she was like a tygress. Rage, sorrow, and perhaps a little envy at his immense riches, of which she had no share, rendered her almost distracted, and her cries and vociferations were so violent, that Don Diego dragged her into the room, that she might not disturb her lady.

While he sought to calm her turbulent passion, the ladies determined to visit the unfortunate Countess. The post-master was giving Antoine heartily to the devil, regretting secretly that he had no share in the contents of this precious box, but comforting himself a little in the supposition that the fellow would be robbed in his turn by the banditti that infested the mountains, and that the great signior now in the house would see *him* paid, and he determined not to

to be a niggard in his charges, as Mittand could not contradict him.

While this was revolving in his mind, Don Diego had been administering comfort to the sorrowful Abigail, by assuring her "he would take care both of her mistress and her," and at length prevailed upon her to wipe off her tears, return up-stairs, and see if the ladies could be admitted.

They followed her. It happened to be one of the Countess's lucid intervals, and happily she had but very imperfectly heard the noise below. Mittand, on approaching her, told her two friends were in the house, and wished to see her.

"Friends! (exclaimed she, rising from her bed, and looking wildly round,) oh! bid them come up.—It is long, long since that I have seen any friends."

The two ladies advanced, and tenderly addressed her. She knew them, gave a faint

faint shriek, and then turned her eyes earnestly to the door. "Why does he not come in? (said she.) Oh! how good you are to bring him back to me!—Don Felix, dear Don Felix, return to me!—Ah! what have I not suffered by your absence!"

The ladies gazed at each other. They could not comprehend what she meant, and concluded she was quite distracted; but, turning her eyes from the door to Isabella, she said mournfully, "Have you not brought your brother?—has not Don Felix sent you to sooth and comfort me?—will he come, or must I go to him?—But let not Adelaide be there: I will not look upon her:—her mother torments me by night, let not that girl haunt me by day.—Come, then, Mittand, dress me;—I am to accompany the mother and sister of my beloved Felix. He has sent for me.—Ah! how could you wrong him?—*He* go with Adelaide!—no, no!—I know he waits for me at Madrid.—Come, quickly dress me."

The

The astonishment that seized on the minds of the ladies was inexpressible. Every thing relative to Don Felix was strange to them : they were at that time really afflicted on his account.

An order had recently been received at their castle for their son to repair immediately to court. Understanding that he was at Estella, they had sent an express after him to the governor's : *he* was then absent with his sister, but his major domo assured the messenger that Don Felix had some time before quitted Estella, nor did the governor know the route he had taken.

The messenger had scarcely returned to Pampeluna with this unsatisfactory account, before a second and very peremptory message arrived, accompanied by some menaces of disgrace and dismissal for his long absence from court.

Extremely

Extremely alarmed, Don Diego sent messengers among all his friends ; and having, for some time, intended going to Madrid, and taking Isabella there, he thought it behoved him to go without loss of time, to pay his duty to the king, and deprecate the displeasure his majesty had taken up against his son, whose mysterious absence he could not account for satisfactorily to himself.

Agreeably to this determination, Don Diego, his lady, and daughter, left Pampeluna, and took their route to Estella, still indulging a hope that from the governor they might gain information, but, on their arrival, he was absent, (then in pursuit of Adelaide,) and from the domestics they only learned that he had some weeks before left the castle without any one's knowing to what place he directed his journey, though they believed to Madrid from the servant's account.

As we are evermore desirous of believing what we wish to be true, they flattered themselves he was really gone there, and by that time had appeared in his proper station. — Don Diego could not forgive his neglect in writing, and the uneasiness he had given to his family ; but his mother, whose darling he was, invented a hundred plausible reasons for his conduct, and doubted not but he could give a mighty good account of himself.

As they knew no one in Estella, but the governor, and were earnest in pursuing their journey, they lost no time in frivolous inquiries, only leaving word for their friend of their route, and visits to him ; they continued on their way to Madrid in a state of suspense, between hope and fear, till they came to Tudella, and stopped to change horses.

Not therefore being in the least acquainted that Don Felix had met with, or accompanied

panied the Countess, nor having in their short stay at the governor's once thought of making any inquiry after her, nothing could equal the surprise of Isabella and her mother to hear that lady talking so familiarly of him, and, though they concluded her entirely deranged, yet still it was wholly unaccountable that her thoughts should dwell upon Don Felix.

His mother, Donna Maria, could not forbear exclaiming, "What is it you mean, madam? Have you seen my son?—do you know where he is?"

"Yes, (answered she, with a mournful air, her ideas suddenly changing,)—yes, he is with Adelaide. Ungrateful and cruel, he has left me for that ungrateful girl.—Look, look, her mother appears!—She was poisoned, she was poisoned!" Then, sinking lower in the bed, she dragged the coverlid over her.

“ Good heavens ! (cried Isabella, much terrified, turning to Mittand,) why your mistress is deranged. If *you* know the cause, delay not to acquaint us with it. What does she mean by talking thus of my brother and Adelaide ?—have you seen him, or what is become of her ?—Speak, if you wish for any favour from us.”

Before the woman could reply, the Countess had recovered from her momentary terror, and drew up her head : looking steadfastly on the ladies, “ You are Donna Maria and Isabella ; tell me the worst that is to befall me. Am I to be prosecuted for the murder, or will Don Felix return to save me ?”

The solemn and earnest tone of her voice affected them greatly. They could not stand a scene so painful ; but, as there was another woman in the room to assist Mittand, and who fortunately understood not a word of French, they withdrew, making a
sign

sign to the terrified and perplexed Abigail to follow them.

She, seeing the unhappy state of her mistress, and, perhaps, fearful of the poverty that awaited her, now all her lady's property was gone, wisely concluded she had best seek for other friends, and disclose all she knew.

Under this impression, she attended the ladies below, and briefly repeated the journey of Don Felix with the Countess,—her belief that he was to marry her, (*there* she told a fib,) but that the girl her lady had kindly taken from the mountains had been very false and wicked to her,—had seduced the affections of Don Felix, and then run away from the Countess, and in a short time after the Don suddenly left her lady, as he said, to go to court, but, as they believed, to join that vile Adelaide, for a piece of a letter from Sancho had told the whole business.

H. 3.

“Her

“ Her lady, (she said,) who dearly loved the gentleman, was now in pursuit of him, but the fatigue and trouble of her mind, and meeting with some persons here at the post-house, who had been her great enemies, had altogether overcame her strength and her senses ; and that wicked thief, Antoine, having helped himself to all their riches, her poor lady would be turned out of doors,—starved to death, and she, after so many years of faithful service, would suffer poverty and want in a strange country.”

This jumble of truth and falsehood she accompanied with a flood of tears, that moved her auditors very much.

“ Fear not, (said Don Diego,) neither your lady nor yourself shall want for any accommodations.”

“ Poor lady, (added Donna Maria,) her senses are entirely deranged. Is there no hope that they may be restored ?”

Mittand

Mittand told her the doctor had great hopes, that she had some intervals of sense since the preceding day, and that she had little doubt but she would get better.

“The story you have told us, (returned Don Diego,) is so very extraordinary,—my son’s conduct in the business so unlike a man of honour and a gentleman, that it alarms and pains me. That there has been an order for his attendance at court is most true, and I hope he has actually gone to Madrid,—then half my cares are over. As for the young woman called Adelaide, whom you mention as so ungrateful and wicked——”

“Ah! my dear sir, (cried Isabella, interrupting him,) there must certainly be some misapprehension or mistake; it is impossible that amiable girl can deserve such epithets.”

“By what right are you qualified to judge? (said Donna Maria, who was not very friendly towards youth and beauty,)—how can you know any thing of her amia-

H 4

bility,

bility, on so short an acquaintance? I do not indeed credit the story, that my son should attach himself to a girl like *her*; at least, not in an honourable way, poor and dependent as she was."

"And under such circumstances, (said Don Diego, with a generous warmth,) I should for ever reprobate him, were he capable of entertaining one thought tending to the seduction of unprotected innocence.—But of this another time. We must now see what can be done for this lady, who it seems owes her present distresses to her affection for your son.

"The whole business is incomprehensible to me, and I fear Don Felix has not conducted himself properly. What share of blame may be attached to the Countess we know not, but her distresses and situation, were she a perfect stranger, and ever so culpable, demands our assistance,—much more if what we have heard is true."

"Indeed,

“ Indeed, (cried Isabella earnestly,) she claims our tenderest pity ; but I would give much to be informed of this Adelaide.— Do you really think, (addressing Mittand,) that my brother knows any thing of her ?”

“ As sure, madam, as you sit there alive, your ladyship is quite mistaken in her. She run away from my lady with some fellow, and the governor went after her, and brought her back, seeing my poor mistress take on so about her, and then she was ashamed to come, and so the governor carried her to her sister’s, and now lately she is runned away from her too, for the lady has been riding about the country after her ; and met my lady here, and a sad piece of work she has made in both families, for she tried to make the governor in love with her too.”

“ What an artful shameless girl ! (cried Donna Maria.)—I thought what she was, though you, Isabella, believed her so amiable. I tremble for my son if such an abandoned baggage gets hold of him.”

H 5

“ Do

“Do not judge so rashly, (said Don Diego ;) a short time may clear this matter up ; mean time we will send for the doctor, and this gentlewoman may go back to her mistress ; but take care, (added he,) should her senses return, not to mention any thing of the robbery, as that might have a fatal effect.”

She promised to obey his orders, and retired, leaving the company not very much at ease by the information she had given them.

The doctor soon obeyed the summons, and expressed his hopes of a favourable turn to the disorder of his patient, and appeared to be an intelligent skilful man ; Don Diego therefore gave some money into his hands, and requested his best care of the lady ; he also gave him his address at Madrid, and desired to hear from him what change might take place in her health, and to acquaint

quaint her where she might find friends, if she chose to come on to that city.

The post-master was amply satisfied, and the ladies gave Mittand a tolerable supply for her present wants: their humanity was greatly interested for the Countess, in a situation so deplorable, but the still greater and more natural anxiety they felt for a son and brother compelled them to proceed on their journey.

The liberal mind of Isabella could not reconcile the tale she had heard to the disadvantage of Adelaide, with that candour and sweetness she had been struck with in her behaviour, and the frankness with which she had mentioned her dependent situation. She had not been much prejudiced in favour of the Countess; there was a degree of insolence and levity in her manner that operated not to her advantage in the judgment of an elegant reserved Spanish lady, and she was persuaded a dependent on such

a disposition must have an uncomfortable time of it.

She wondered, indeed, that Adelaide had never written to her, nor by any means endeavoured to cultivate her regards; yet, though there seemed to be a degree of ingratitude, as well as inattention, attached to her apparent neglect, she would not hastily decide against a young person she had felt so inclined to love.

Don Diego, who knew but too many instances of folly and misconduct in his son's behaviour, was not so much surprised as hurt by what he had been told. The gay manners of the Countess, he supposed, had invited his gallantries; but that he should follow, attend, and then unhand somely desert, her, was, he thought, equally repugnant to honour and humanity, and, if her disorder was the consequence of such a desertion, it proved her passion was very violent, and
must

must proceed from more than common gallantry on the part of his son.

His conduct, he feared, had been very reprehensible both towards her and this Adelaide, whose beauty, innocence, and friendless situation, entitled her to the consideration of every man of honour : the more he reflected, the more he was disturbed, and proceeded on his journey under much inquietude.

Donna Maria, who could find no faults in her son, but believed every one must be attracted by his person and merits, doubted not but both ladies were in love with him, and that jealousy and rivalry had produced the events Mittand had related : in the room, therefore, of feeling any indignation against him, she valued herself on his attractions, and bestowed only a contemptuous kind of pity on the unfortunate victims to hopeless love and uncommon merit.

Under

Under such different impressions, and minds deeply occupied by their own reflections, they silently journied towards Madrid.

No sooner had they left the house, than Mittand began to consider her own interest. The money given to her was not known to any one, and therefore she had a right to consider it as her own private property, and not give a crown to the general support; she then applied to the doctor: he freely gave her such supplies as he thought necessary, and the post-master, finding he was likely to be paid all expences, as readily permitted her to have whatever she thought proper to ask for, and also gave every instruction to all the post-boys to search for and secure Antoine, if he could be discovered; who had really absconded, and carried off all the bills, and most of the valuables his lady possessed, without the least regret, or remorse, for the wretched state he had left her in.

The

The Countess had enjoyed some hours of undisturbed rest, and awoke with more calmness and recollection than could have been expected. Some ideas floated in her brain, of seeing Donna Maria and Habella, but it was like a vision, or a dream imperfectly remembered. She called to Mittand, who was surprised at the alteration a few hours had produced in the looks and voice of her lady, inquired of her how long she had slept, and whether she had in reality seen any company.

“I am sensible (said she) that I have been very ill, and perhaps, indeed, I think I *must* have been mistaken in supposing I have seen the mother and sister of the perfidious Felix. Alas! that ingrate engrosses all my ideas.”

“But you are not mistaken, madam, (answered she,) those ladies have been here, and were very sorry to be obliged to leave you, but they had orders to attend the court on account of their son.”

“Is

“Is it possible? (cried she briskly,)—is he really then at Madrid?”

“No, indeed, (returned she, not at all desirous that her lady should go there,) they do not seem to know where he is; and, from some words that dropped, I believe they are in much affliction about him.”

Again the Countess sighed from sorrow and disappointment, and her head growing more composed, she began to reflect on the scenes that had passed some days before,—a retrospection that violently agitated her, and produced a temporary paroxysm of her disorder; but, as the fit was less violent, and of a shorter duration, there were great hopes of a speedy recovery.

She continued fluctuating several days, but became gradually more sensible and composed. The doctor congratulated her on her returning health, and she thought it became her to reward him handsomely for his diligent care and attendance.

△ She

She ordered Mittand to bring her strong box. Neither the robbery, nor desertion of Antoine, had yet been discovered to her. She had once or twice asked for him, but her woman had been directed to give an evasive answer, from a fear of ill consequences; but this peremptory order she was not prepared to evade, or elude. Looking extremely confused, she stammered out, she believed the doctor was already well paid.

"I think (said she) that Signior Don Diego gave the doctor money enough for that purpose."

"Don Diego pay my doctor! (cried she, with an air of surprise and haughtiness,) I do not comprehend you."

At that moment the gentleman very opportunely entered. "Ah! sir, (said the Countess,) I never wished for you more earnestly." She then repeated what Mittand had told her, and requested an explanation.

The

The doctor very frankly told her every circumstance, mentioned the money he had disbursed, and the sum remaining in his hands, which he now purposely waited on her to give up.

Her surprise and vexation were extreme. "My God! (exclaimed she,) why was I to be obliged to Don Diego! If my unhappy malady precluded me from acting for myself, how comes it, Miltand, you did not take out what money was necessary from my pockets, or box?"

"All that was in your pockets, madam, (replied she) was taken out, and expended, and for the box——Pray, doctor, explain that to my lady."

He then, after some little preface, acquainted the lady with the extent of her misfortune,—the steps taken to trace Antoine,—the generosity of Don Diego, and his wishes to serve her, should she think proper to follow them to Madrid.

No

No words would do justice to the scene that followed. Her natural violence of temper, not subdued by her illness, but acquiring a degree of insanity from her late disorder, broke out into the most horrid paroxysms of rage and invective. Curses, exclamations, grief, and despair, agitated her to a degree little short of madness, and the doctor was apprehensive her malady would return in its full force. He tried every method to sooth and compose her spirits, gave the most flattering hopes that the fellow would be taken, and her property restored; but this only seemed to increase her violence and distress, for they knew not that the perfidy of Antoine affected her equally with the loss of her riches. They knew not that she dreaded his being overtaken and brought back: the recovery of her strong box could not counterbalance for the injury she might sustain from the man's provoked malice, if he found his own life in danger. They knew not how deeply he was in his lady's secrets, and that she must submit

submit quietly to the man who had wronged her.

In vain then did the doctor and Mittand expend their eloquence and breath : she was inconsolable, and the oftener he assured her that Antoine *could not* escape, the more her disorder increased. At length, when violence and passion had expended itself, when exhausted, she grew calm, silent, and despairing ; he ventured to suggest that the generous nobleman, who had so effectually and providentially been brought to her relief, had warmly offered his services if she came to Madrid, and no doubt might assist her in all her wishes.

Here her pride took the alarm. “ No, (said she,) I will not go there. My bills, my letters of credit, my jewels, are all gone, and shall I go to Madrid, and wait the slow return of fresh remittances,—an object of his bounty ?—no : my watch, my snuff-box, and rings, shall be sold ; the money will

will take me from hence, and at Saragossa I will remain till enabled to travel, at present I know not where; *that* must be a future concern. If you, sir, will have the goodness to dispose of the trifles I have left—”

“ Alas ! my lady !” exclaimed Mittand, sobbing violently, and wringing her hands.

“ What ails you ?” asked the Countess.

“ *All, all is gone !* (said she, weeping still more bitterly.) When you was so very ill, I took the watch, snuff-box, rings, and money, and put all into your dressing-case, and till this morning never missed it, for, having expended all the money, I had not gone to the case those last three days, nor ever thought to look till that horrid villain’s rogueries were discovered. All is gone, my lady, nothing is left indeed !”

“ So then, I am left a beggar in a strange country, (said she, calmly ;)—deserted by a base perfidious man,—robbed and betrayed by a confidential servant,—without relations, friends, or money.—This is retribution,

tion, indeed ! Well, sir, what is now to become of me ?—I cannot now even reward you for saving a worthless life, nor pay the master of the house for the trouble I have given here.—What is now to be done ?”—said she, in a quick tone, but without any symptoms of passion.

“ Do not distress yourself, madam, (answered he.) In this house you have nothing to pay. By the generosity of that friendly nobleman I have discharged all debts here. For myself I make no demands : I doubt neither your honour nor liberality. The money in my hands (laying it upon the table) will carry you to Saragossa, or even to Madrid, where your friend would supply every want. When your remittances arrive, you may pay me ; till then I will not retain a single rial of this money.”

The Countess was greatly struck with this generosity in a stranger. She gazed upon him several moments without speaking ; then
repeating

repeating the words "honour and liberality" softly to herself, she said, "Well, sir, necessity compels me to be obliged to you; you shall be no loser. I will, if possible, set off for Saragossa to-morrow. To pursue an ungrateful man is not now in my power. The person, on whom I had letters of credit at the city I return to, may possibly supply me; if not, you must indeed wait the arrival of fresh remittances."

The doctor made additional compliments of his reliance on her integrity, and mentioned his demands as a trifle that ought not to give her the smallest concern; he only requested she would not be too precipitate in her convalescent state, but wait a day or two longer before she attempted her journey.

This request she reluctantly complied with, though her weakness must have impeded her journey, had she persevered in the attempt. Four days she continued there,

there, spake little, and eat less; yet her strength gradually returned, and the fifth day was fixed on for her return to Saragossa. With this intention we leave her, and look back on poor Adelaide, who has been too long neglected.

We left her and Don Felix in none of the best of humours; her fear of him augmented her dislike; yet she was too much in his power to irritate him, though she could conceal neither her vexation nor contempt at his conduct. He grew every hour more devoted to her; he discovered graces in her person and mind that filled him with astonishment; for, impressed with the idea that nobility of birth only could inspire just and elevated sentiments, a dignity in mind and action, he could not reconcile it to himself, by what means a girl, bred in the mountains, without education or society, had imbibed such principles of strict honour and delicacy as distinguished this friendless orphan.

She

She talked of her father, what was this father?—either a peasant, or some proscribed and banished man, for crimes that dishonoured and cut him off from society.—If the first, he must have been incapable of instructing her; if the latter, he must have been worthless, or his unoffending child would have had some friends, some relations, who would have given her an asylum from the dishonour attached to her by the ill conduct of her father.

That father was now dead, yet her name was not revealed; no friend appeared to help her, and therefore he concluded it was impossible she could have the advantages of birth. In short, the more he puzzled himself in a variety of conjectures, the less he grew informed, and all he knew was, that she was charming,—belonged to no one,—that he loved her, and that he was resolved to make her happy—in his own way.

Three days were passed by Adelaide in these gloomy remains of grandeur, which, in her account of time, were three ages; for she had no amusement, no company, but that of the man she both feared and hated. The woman attendant appeared to view her with complacency, but she was fearful of trying her compassion too soon, till, by her gentle looks and winning manners, she had engaged her in her behalf.

Mean time Don Felix was tired of acting a part which afforded him no satisfaction; he too clearly discerned that he gained no ground in the affection of Adelaide; her cold repulsive looks still continued, his compliments and assiduities were thrown away, and his passion increased hourly, without the smallest hope of a return.

Mortified and enraged, he determined no longer to gratify her pride, nor distract his own bosom by vain attempts to please her, but change his method of proceeding,

and, if he could not flatter her into complaisance, try if terror would operate more to his advantage. Agreeable to this plan, the following morning, on the opening of a fine clear frosty day, he asked her to walk towards a rising hill, to view a beautiful prospect, and see a hermit's cave. As she knew herself equally in his power, whether at home or abroad, and really wished to enjoy the fresh air, she made no objection.

They passed through a neglected shrubbery into a long avenue, shaded with tall chestnut trees, on a rising ground, all the way. Towards the top, the immense height of the trees and bending branches almost obscured day-light ; it was solemn, gloomy, and terrific.

She involuntarily exclaimed, " My God ! how still and solitary ! "

" Here is the hermit's dwelling," said he, turning a little to the right ; and, piercing through the trees, they saw a moss-covered
 I 2 hut,

hut, in which was a long stone form, hewn out of the hill, and a large stone also before it, to serve for the purpose of a table.— A small rill of clear water run through it, that burst from the side of the rock behind, and forcing its way through an aperture of this solitary dwelling, had been guided into a narrow stream, and turned off on one side.

It was raised between the clefts of two large trees, the rock at the back : the inside was lined with moss and shells of no great value, but they appeared there to an advantage.

“ Ah ! (said Adelaide,) how tranquil must the person who inhabited this spot spend his days, if free from worldly attachments, and a mind unclouded by regret or remorse !”

“ True, (returned Felix, laughing;) if such a being ever did exist, he might vegetate here very comfortably. Chestnuts and water must afford an excellent repast, and
tend

tend much to tranquillise his passions ; but I confess that I do not at present derive any benefit from the stillness that pervades here ; on the contrary, mine are at this moment of the tumultuous kind ; methinks my sweet Adelaide is the goddess of the woods, and I her faithful Pan, here, at her side, to profit by the delicious opportunity that presents itself."

He threw his arms round her, and obliged her to sit down. The terror that seized on every faculty of the poor girl it is impossible to describe. Trembling, she sought to disengage herself from his arms, but he only more closely pressed her to him.

" I beseech you, Don Felix, (said she, when she was able to speak,) to remember what you owe to a defenceless unprotected young creature, whom you have cruelly betrayed into your power. Consider your own honour,—the honour of a noble family, and do not degrade both by the ruin of an orphan,

phan, who has the highest claim to your protection."

"My angelic girl, (cried he, a little softened by her address,) why will you oblige me to measures contrary to my wishes? I love you,—you know it,—and I cannot, nor will not live without you."

"*Love me!* (repeated Adelaide,) profane not the world! Love delights in acts of kindness; love seeks the happiness of the beloved object, not its own gratification.—Would love seek to debase, to ruin a friendless being,—to incur her hatred and detestation?"

"Tell me then, (said he, impatiently,) how I shall gain your affection; bid me hope that you will consent to be mine; promise but *that*, and I will wait a short time longer for the completion of it."

"Never, never, (said she,) will I promise what is foreign to the sentiments of my heart. Release me; take me back to my friends;—I will forgive, I will even endeavour to esteem you."

"I

"I will be trifled with no longer!" cried he, enraged at her perseverance.

She struggled, and shrieked aloud: seeing herself in imminent danger, "I will, (cried she,) I will try to love you, only spare me now."

She redoubled her shrieks, and in that moment a man with a pistol in his hand sprang through the trees, crying, "Villain, desist, or this moment is your last!"

Don Felix in his surprise turned from Adelaide. She darted through the trees; and, finding herself at the top of a craggy mountain, like a young roebuck she slipped from one part to another with incredible speed, regardless of danger, though at another time she must have shuddered at the prospect before her. She came at length towards a less rugged part, where a few goats were browsing, and at the same time saw a shepherd beneath, gathering his sheep, to

lead them towards a rivulet that run intersecting a small adjoining valley.

Adelaide exerted her voice to reach the man's ear : he stopped, she quickened her pace, and safely joined him. The little Spanish she had acquired now befriended her. She implored his protection in the most pathetic terms, throwing her fearful looks towards the mountain she had descended, and expecting to see her pursuer. The man gazed at her with astonishment, but even the peasantry of Spain have high notions of honour, and some small remains of chivalry in their disposition. In the time of Charles the Fifth, this spirit extended itself universally throughout the kingdom.

This shepherd, with a gallantry that might have shamed a more polished man of after times, requested her not to fear any one ; his staff should defend her ; and, desiring her to lay hold of his arm, he led her

her across the plain to a few scattered huts on the side of another hill. Entering one of them, she saw a decent-looking woman of a grave deportment, and two younger ones, who, though evidently surprised, received her with kindness, and conducted her to a seat.

The spirits of Adelaide exhausted, her body fatigued, she could no longer repress her emotions : a violent gush of tears, which she freely indulged, after some time seemed to relieve her. They waited respectfully, till she was a little composed, and then brought her some milk and fruits.

She had scarcely begun to partake of the refreshment, before a man abruptly entered, whom, at the first glance, she knew to be Lefare, the robber she had left ill in the cave.

Surprise is too poor a word for what she felt. She screamed, and the milk she was conveying

conveying to her lips dropped from her trembling hand : the shepherd started up, and stood before her.

“ Fear nothing, (said Lefare, endeavouring to pass him ;) I am a friend ; do not terrify yourself, (continued he, addressing Adelaide ;) I have been so happy as to save you from violence ; I have no design to injure you myself.”

He spoke this in French, therefore the cottage folks did not understand him, but attentively watched her looks. His address in some degree removed the first impression of terror. “ If, as I supposed, (aid she,) you are the person who just now so opportunely appeared to preserve me, I most devoutly thank heaven and you for the providential interference ; and, if you are indeed a friend, an altered man, I sincerely rejoice to see you.”

“ You will find me such, (replied he ;) and to you, madam, I am indebted for my reformation.

reformation. Little did I expect the happiness of meeting you, though I have been in search of you those two months past."

"Of me! (cried she, extremely surprised,) what could be your inducements to search for me?"

"I have a very long story to tell you," answered he.

"But take the refreshments, I interrupted; calm your spirits, and fear nothing disagreeable. — But Don Felix, (she said,) the gentleman you attacked in the hermitage, what is become of him?"

"He is not in a condition to injure you, (replied he;) he advanced hastily towards me, and, in attempting to wrest the pistol from my hand, he moved the trigger, and received the whole contents in his right arm, which is most terribly shattered.

"He fell with excess of pain, and the great effusion of blood: humanity would not permit me to leave him in that state without assistance, I therefore stopped the blood with bandages, and helped him on his

legs. He received my assistance with a gloomy silence, only once breaking out into execrations on my cursed interference, and exclaiming on the escape of *Adelaide*, whom he swore he would have in spite of men or devils.

“This was all that passed on his side. The name of *Adelaide*, and the transient view I had of your person, convinced me I had fortunately served the person I was in quest of; though you are so much improved, that, had not your name been repeated, the very little I saw of your face, in the moment you escaped, would hardly have led me to conclude it could have been you in such a situation.

“I saw the gentleman (continued he) descend into the avenue of trees, towards a castle, and then hastened after you, assured that you could not be concealed any where round the mountain, but where I might hope to find you: I am happily justified in my belief.”

Adelaide

Adelaide was greatly shocked to hear of the accident to Don Felix, though it was her preservation. She addressed herself to the good cottagers, and briefly, as well as she could make them understand, told them, that violence having been offered to her by a gentleman, this man had rescued her, and wounded him, and she hoped this man was her friend.

This satisfied the good folks, and Lesare was offered a seat; she was inflamed with curiosity to know his motives for seeking her, and anxious to know whether poor Lewis, left in the dungeon, had escaped or not; but this last desire she dared not express, and therefore was content to urge him on the subject of the former.

“I have already told you, (said he,) that it is a long story, and I must begin it from the hour of your escape, since it is not necessary to tell you the plans I had formed for our leaving the mountains together, and
the

the presumption I aspired to of marrying you."

Adelaide was surprised at the word "presumption," but she would not interrupt him, and he proceeded thus.

"I well remember you left me to take the air at the mouth of the cavern. I impatiently waited for your return. My anxiety increased, and at length, no longer able to support the suspicions that arose to my mind, It railed myself to the opening, and saw all my hopes were blasted ;—you were gone ! I made the hills resound with your name ; all was vain. Doubt settled into certainty ; you had escaped, and I was incapable of pursuing you. Obligated to return into the cave, to attend to myself in the weak condition I was reduced to, you may easily conceive I was not very patient under my sufferings.

"I passed the remainder of the day, and following night, without ease or rest, and
the

the next day I found my weakness increased, and my wound very troublesome; with difficulty I crept about to get necessaries for my support, and I began to fear I must perish for want of food.

“ That day passed heavily ; at night I had thrown myself on the bed, a prey to the most distracting thoughts, when, suddenly, a rustling noise in the next cavern struck my ear, and presently the name of Adelaide was called upon in a soft tone. I started up,—listened,—all was silent. The lamp seemed to burn feebly ; my agitations were great. I laid down, but kept my eye on the opening to the next cave. A few moments only passed, when a faint light emitted from it, and was followed by the figure of the murdered Lewis, a lamp in one hand, and a pistol in the other.

“ Cold damps bedewed my limbs ; I gazed without the power of speaking or moving. The spirit, as I thought, advanced

vanced cautiously, looking earnestly round, till it came to the foot of my bed. Presenting the pistol, "Villain, (it said in a hollow voice,) where is Adelaide?"

"I heard no more. Conscience overpowered my reason, and gave no time for thought. My senses fled, and when they returned, all was silent as before. Never did a poor guilty wretch suffer more acute torments than my bosom felt. I was assured it was the ghost of Lewis, and the next idea was, that Adelaide had fallen down the craggy mountains, and was killed also.—Every crime I had committed in the course of four years (and heaven knows they were many and shocking ones,) now rose to my full view. Fancy brought every injured wretch before me, and I suffered inexpressible torments. In this way I laid, till, by the singing of the birds, I was convinced it was morning. Gladly I crept from my bed to the mouth of the cavern, and breathed the fresh air to revive my sinking spirits.

"When

“ When night came on, and weakness compelled me to lie down, how horrid were the ideas that oppressed me. Sleep would not close my eyes ; they were bent towards the opening. At length, to my unspeakable terror, I saw the glimmering light again appear ; I could no longer contain myself ; I called aloud upon heaven for mercy and protection, solemnly abjured the wickedness of my past life, and vowed my future days should be devoted to penitence.

“ I had scarcely pronounced my vows, before the same figure, and in the same position, approached me : horror stopped my tongue, and every faculty seemed benumbed.

“ Fear not, (he said ;) penitence will find mercy, and Providence preserves innocence from the power of the wicked. I am Lewis, supposed to be murdered, and wonderfully preserved. If you are sincere in the vows you have uttered, heaven will accept

accept them ; if not, tremble at its vengeance."

"He seated himself at the foot of the bed. I was unable to speak, and for some moments doubted my senses ; but, on venturing to look more steadily, I was convinced it was no shade, but a real substance. He looked deadly pale indeed, and very feeble, but it was Lewis himself, and never did I feel a purer joy than at that moment, which relieved my conscience from the weight of one murder. I could say but little, yet he seemed to credit what I *did* say, and again asked impatiently for Adelaide.

"I repeated the manner of your escape, and the consequent distress of my mind.—

"I have cause (said he) to believe you speak truth, from a discovery I made a few hours since. Heaven will, I trust, protect her ; yet, when I think of the dangers she

she may encounter from the rocks and mountains, from wolves that infest them, and still worse, perhaps, from savage men: my fears distract me, nor can I forbear curses on those miscreants who have rendered me thus helpless to seek for, or protect her."

"A long conversation, not necessary to repeat, passed between us. He told me of the wonderful courage and humanity of Adelaide, who had preserved his life at the risk of her own, and bitterly deplored his situation and incapacity to assist her.—I was equally struck with the justice of heaven in the death of my associate, my own punishment, and the extraordinary preservation of Lewis.

"He never ceased lamenting his errors and crimes, yet *he* never stained his hands by murder like me; (here Adelaide felt a sensation of joy;) and therefore, if he suffered from repentance, and a retrospection, what

what bitter sorrow and remorse harrowed up *my* soul!—such as only the fear of death, and stings of conscience, could have produced in a mind so depraved, so habitually wicked as mine for years had been.

“ Five days we passed together, mutually distressed, yet every day gaining strength, and returning health. The riches in our cave were great, but we could neither return them to the rightful owners, nor could they all be of service to us. We furnished ourselves with money, however, as much as we could possibly take, and, having resolved to pursue different routes, Lewis chose to examine all the ground on the South side of the Pyrenees, from an idea that you would go to your former residence, or seek after the old monk whom your father had before visited. I, on the contrary, supposed you would take a different road, and cross the mountains to Navarre. Our hopes of success were but slender, yet every thing was to be tried; and, as it was necessary to fix
on

On some place of rendezvous, we agreed to meet that day month at Baredge, and, if either did not attend after three days waiting, a letter was to be left of information from the other.

“ Parting with Lewis gave me a good deal of pain: he had an understanding much superior to mine, which had been cultivated by education. My advantages had been few, and those I had misapplied: he had endeavoured to compose my mind, and inspire hope that a sincere and contrite spirit would be accepted at the throne of grace. By his conversation my mind has been strengthened, and my good purposes confirmed. I quitted him therefore with regret, but it was in the service of virtue and defenceless innocence, and that was a source of consolation.

“ I could travel but slowly, and strictly examined every part of the mountains, as I was well acquainted with every cave, aperture,

ture, valley, and dell, on the North and East side of the Pyrenees. I went through all lower Navarre, and at length crossed into Spain, making every possible inquiry to no purpose, till I came to Pampeluna, where I was seized with a fever, I believe the consequence of fatigue and an uneasy mind.

“ During the time of my illness, a good priest came to see me. I understood a little Spanish ; he was a tolerable proficient in French. Between both, we understood each other very well, and he assisted much in quieting my conscience.

I was eager to pursue my journey, intending to cross into Arragon, as I could hear nothing of you at Pampeluna ; and accidentally mentioned your name one morning to the priest, as I had before only described your person, when I said I was in search of a young woman, and made inquiry at the convents.

“ Adelaide !

“Adelaide ! (repeated he ;) — a young lady of that name was at the governor’s some time before, with a French countess ; I did not see her, but I have heard the two ladies speak of such a one.”

“Adelaide was so common a name in France, and it was so unlikely that the person I sought for should be considered in the light of a young lady, and a companion for a countess, (forgive me, mademoiselle,) I thought it impossible *that* Adelaide could be the young woman I wished to meet with ; I carelessly bid him ask a description of her person, though almost indifferent to his answer.

“In a few hours he returned with such an account as at once affected me with joy and confusion. He was exact to a nicety in describing your person, and added that you was met with in the mountains by this Countess, who had taken you as a companion in a tour through Spain. The latter

ter part of this intelligence he had from the governor's lady, to whom the Countess had revealed it.

"I now regretted the time I had lost in running about the mountains and visiting convents, which, with my illness, had consumed above a fortnight. I requested the good man to inquire more fully the route you were to take, and every sort of intelligence he could obtain.

"The following day he brought all the information I could wish, particularly that the Countess proposed staying sometime in Estella. I now wrote a letter to Lewis, as I knew it would be very unlikely I should return in time, and rather wished him to proceed after me."

"Excuse me for interrupting you, (said Adelaide;) I am certainly much obliged for your kind solicitude for my safety; but, after being clearly convinced I was under

the protection of a lady of rank and fortune, what motives induced you to follow me, who could neither have the liberty of entertaining any one, nor power to serve them; and you must know, when I quitted you, it was not with a favourable impression of your character or sentiments."

"The question you ask, (answered Le-lare,) is a very natural one, and yet it is such as I hardly know how to answer. To say that both Lewis and myself entertained the same sentiments for you is very little satisfactory; yet it is certain our chief view was to make you rich and independent from the wealth in the cavern."

"Oh! (cried Adelaide,) not for worlds would I derive my support from money procured by robbery, assassination, and murder. I am not very superstitious, yet am almost ready to fear I have drawn upon myself the divine displeasure, by taking and making use of a small sum from your cave: this I know, that I have ever regretted it."

"You are much too scrupulous surely, (said he ;) by whatever base means that money was obtained, it cannot be dedicated to a better purpose than to the service of virtue. However, our intention was to find you, to put you into possession of a comfortable fortune, and leave you to dispose of it as you pleased. I do not say either were entirely disinterested, though Lewi's late conduct has much surprised me.

"But to return to my story. Having rewarded the priest, and written to Lewis, I proceeded towards Estella. On going through a wood, about six miles from Pampluna, I was suddenly surrounded by four men, who, I saw in a moment, were banditti. My knowledge of our cant phrases in the mountains availed nothing with them, nor even an acknowledgment that I had pursued the same line. They either did not, or would not credit me, but rifled me of every louis d'or I had concealed, and so severely handled me, that I was incapable

of walking. My horse they let loose at a full gallop through the wood, shouting and laughing at me for the good booty I had given them.

“ For many hours I remained in the wood, not able to move a step forward, and not likely to meet succour, as the road was not much frequented. Most fortunately for me, however, a carriage, drawn by four mules, with two attendants, came in sight, when I had given myself up to despair. They could not see me, as I had been dragged a little way from the common road, behind some trees.

“ I exalted my voice to as loud a key as possible, and begged help for the love of God. I was heard: the servants came to me, and, on hearing my story, one of them lifted me up behind the other, and I was carried back to Pampeluna in great agony of body, and vexation of mind.

"The generous master of the servants had me conveyed to the general hospital, where I had the best advice for my sprains and bruises, and much better attendance and accommodations than were generally allowed, all at his expence. My hurts were of more consequence than I imagined, and confined me there upwards of two months, during which time I heard nothing of Lewis, nor could my old friend, the priest, who often visited me, hear any thing farther of the Countess.

"The vexation of my mind retarded the cure of my body, but it was of infinite service to the penitence I felt for my manifold crimes. I looked upon it as a just retribution for similar and worse sins, and bore the punishment with submission, from a conviction that it was deserved.

"But, when my health was established, how was I to proceed on the journey? My humane benefactor gave me ten piastres to
take

take me to Estelia ; but ten piaftres would be soon exhausted, and what then was to become of me ? I thought it wifer to return, firft, to the rendezvous, where I had appointed to meet Lewis, and then to the cave, for a frefh fupply of money.

“ I returned, without lofs of time, from the fruitlefs errand, and having come to Baredge——”

At this moment, the shepherd, who had walked out, returned in violent hafte, faying, “ Hide yourfelves instantly. Several men, armed, are defcending the mountain.— Come with me, added he to Adelaide ; taking her hand, he led her out, a back way, to a thicket, behind his hut, on the fide of another hill, and, throwing fome brush wood lightly over her, “ remain there, (faid he,) till I come again.”

He quickly returned into his cabin. Lewis had fled another way, but was purfued

by the armed men, at the head of whom was Sancho, the servant of Don Felix, who fired, and took his aim but too well. Life dropped, and spoke no more! Such at last was the end of that man, who had been covered with crimes, escaped eminent dangers, grew a sincere penitent to all appearance, and perished, at length, through the malice and wickedness of another.

Sancho, with his party, entered the shepherd's house, and inquired if they had seen a young lady. They replied in the negative, with much apparent unconcern. Their dwelling was searched, and Adelaide heard them pass close by her with trembling limbs and a beating heart. They examined the neighbouring huts, and, missing of their prize, they departed, after charging the shepherds, should a young woman come there, to detain her.

The fellow that was shot they said had been a robber, and a short time before had
robbed

robbed their lord on the hill, and dangerously wounded him. Now he was done for, and had met with his deserts.

They were no sooner departed, in quest of poor Adelaide, than the shepherd fetched her from the thicket; and, leaving the women to comfort her, he went out to look at the dead body of Lesare, which had been left on the side of the hill. All appearance of life was fled; but some of them had rifled his pockets, while Sancho had been engaged among the dwellings: he found them turned out, and some loose papers scattered about, which he picked up, and brought to Adelaide.

She was extremely shocked to hear of the melancholy catastrophe that had befallen that wretched man; it threw her into a train of serious reflections. "This poor fellow was become a penitent, (thought she,) and has met his death through his endeavours to serve me. I am eventually then

the cause of it. Gracious Father ! I have destroyed two lives ;—how dreadful ! My dear father's death is now revenged, but I shudder to think that the retribution came through me. Would to heaven it had happened by other means, for, as long as I exist, it must be a source of eternal regret to me ! Poor Lesare ! he was a repentant sinner. Perhaps the justice and mercy of heaven took him off in a proper frame of mind, to prevent a relapse, and the commission of fresh crimes. I will indulge the idea for my own peace of mind, and trust his sins may be forgiven."

She opened some of the scraps of paper ; they were chiefly travelling bills. She found he had been at Estella, and several other places in that neighbourhood. A fragment of a letter attracted her notice : she opened it, and these were the contents.

————— "Reasons of the utmost consequence prevent me from appearing in that neighbourhood,

neighbourhood, but I have now certain intelligence that she is with the Marchioness de Gusman. Go there,—see her,—tell her the riches in the cave are her's ;—tell her also, her friend, the hermit in the Pyrenees, has good news for her. Prepare her to hear——”

The rest was torn away, and poor Adelaide, agitated by hope, fear, and curiosity, eagerly turned over every scrap in vain, for further information. She sent out the shepherd to search the ground, and the pockets of the deceased Lesare ; but not another bit was to be seen, and in all the agonies of painful suspense she read the foregoing lines twenty times over.

“ Alas ! (cried she,) how unfortunate I am ! Lesare is destroyed, who alone could give me any information. Why did he waste time in such a prolix account of himself, when he had material intelligence to give me ! and now this paper only adds to

my anxiety, and clouds my mind with doubt and uncertainty. What am I to do? — what can I do? — Pursued, oppressed, how shall I either get back to the Marchioness, or return to the Pyrenees !”

The good women of the hut, who saw the dreadful uneasiness she suffered, and beheld her tears flow, pitied a poor friendless young creature. They knew she was sought after, and that the man, who was killed under the name of a robber, had not been her companion, but came there by accident.— Feeling much for her distress, they endeavoured to soothe and relieve her. She gave them to understand the lord of the castle had stolen her from her friends, had violently insulted her, and that the man, lately so basely killed, accidentally came to her rescue without any knowledge of her at that time, though it came out since she had known him before.

She

She told them she wished to be conveyed either to the Marchioness de Gusman, or to the Pyrenees, but she was apprehensive of falling into the hands of Don Felix, and knew not what course to steer. The shepherd said, that it would be most natural for the gentleman to seek for her among her friends, and therefore dangerous for her to attempt a journey at present. If he might advise, she had better go to the neighbouring convent, and get messengers sent to her friends.

She joyfully accepted, and agreed to follow this advice; the only difficulty was to get there in safety. He bid her not despond, for another day she had best remain where she was, and, as they would keep a good look out, she need not fear being surprised; in the evening he would go to the convent, which laid between two neighbouring mountains, and bespeak the protection of the house for her.

Adelaide gratefully accepted his offered kindness. Fortunately she had a few pistoles in her pocket, given to her by the generous Marchioness, and also a watch, neither of which Don Felix had attempted to deprive her of. She rejoiced exceedingly that she had the power to reward these hospitable people, whose natural benevolence might shame the artificial kindness of the great, and who knew not that she possessed a single marvidie to give them.

They passed the remainder of the day without any further disturbance from without, but the mind of our heroine was greatly distressed; the untimely death of Lesare,—her own persecutions,—the attentions of Lewis,—and the difficulty in determining how she ought to proceed, or what measures to take, wholly engrossed her thoughts, and made her very unhappy.

The hospitable shepherd remembered his promise; and, when he had gathered in his flocks,

flocks, departed for the convent. The night was pretty far advanced before he returned, and gave her to understand, she would be received whenever she appeared at the grate.

“ I knew it, (said he exultingly ;) the ladies are good and charitable. I am not unknown to the porterefs ; and what is more, the men who are in search of you have already been there to make inquiries. I have told your story, and they will protect you from any lord or duke in Spain.”

It was thought best that she should depart at break of day ; the good woman of the house was to lend her some upper garments of her's to throw over her, and she was to carry a basket of fruit in her hand.

That night Adelaide enjoyed a few hours of more quiet rest than she had known for some time, which she hailed as a good omen, and rose refreshed for her expedition. She
had

had been so accustomed lately to be hurried about, to see a variety of strange faces, and receive fresh kindnesses from persons whom chance had thrown in her way, that the natural timidity which hung about her, when first known to the Countess le Marr, was greatly worn off, and she had acquired a more unembarrassed air, a more easiness of address, though accompanied with that modest elegance which ever distinguishes a pure mind.

She had less dread therefore in the idea of encountering a set of strange people than she would have felt formerly; and, after liberally rewarding her hospitable preservers, much beyond their expectations or desires, she accompanied the shepherd toward the convent.

On the way, she expressed some anxiety for the body of poor Lefare. He told her it had been already put into a stable to preserve it from birds and beasts of prey, and the

the following day would be committed to the earth. Ah ! thought she, with a deep sigh, no charitable hand performed that sad office for my beloved parent : his dear remains were a prey no doubt to devouring wolves !

The idea was so oppressive, that she was ready to faint ; a copious flood of tears abated the painful sensations that almost stifled her. The man thought it was from apprehension of her situation ; for, as she could not speak Spanish fluently, though she understood it very well, they often mistook what she said, and did not comprehend many things she had told them ; he believed that she was afraid of going among the nuns.

“ Don't fear the good sisters, (said he ;) they are very mild and compassionate. To be sure, it is a very lonesome place, but there is company enough, and no wicked lords can come there to vex you ; besides, I will call to inquire how you do, and, if it
is

is to go the kingdom over, I'll serve you if I can."

"But, (said she,) suppose I wanted to send out of the kingdom, the other side of the Pyrenees, which divide France and Spain, do you think I could procure a messenger?"

"Why, I fear, (said he,) my Therese would not let *me* go there, but a man might be procured; but then it will take so much money, one cannot travel for nothing."

"You are right, (said Adelaide.) Well, inquire a little what will be the expence to go so far as Baredge, and let me know in a day or two."

He promised to obey her, and they hastened on through a deep and narrow valley, till they arrived at the gates of the convent, which terminated the valley, and was surrounded with trees, between two high mountains, that appeared as if cut through to admit the building. Accustomed in this wild country to hills and glens,

to old castles and gloomy recesses, she felt no terror from the appearance of the convent, but, when the gates were opened, and she was admitted with a friendly aspect, she felt a sensation of pleasure to which she had long been a stranger.

She was conducted to the presence of the abbess, who received her with an air of dignified graciousness. The natural solemnity in the manners of a Spanish lady of noble birth was considerably augmented by the dignity and gravity attached to the superior of a convent. She looked, she moved a queen, but there was a sweetness in the tones of her voice, a sensibility in the expression of her eye, that encouraged and delighted Adelaide, whose heart, expanding by the reception she met with, and struck with reverence for the majestic form before her, she gave way to the emotions of that heart, by throwing herself at the feet of the abbess, and kissing her hand with a flood of tears.

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The venerable lady was extremely moved, and no less pleased, with the action than the appearance of the young woman she had condescended to receive under her protection.

“ Rise, my good child, (said she, in an affectionate manner,) — rise, and compose yourself: here you are safe from all harm, or persecution. If good and virtuous, command our protection.”

“ O madam ! (cried Adelaide, in her broken Spanish,) heaven will reward you for your kindness to a friendless unhappy orphan, and I hope it is no guilt or arrogance in me to say, *undeservedly* unhappy, for voluntarily I never injured one human being.”

“ Then, my child, (returned she,) no longer call yourself unhappy. If conscious innocence supports you, the troubles of the world, the oppressions of the wicked, and the delusive arts of mankind, may for a time disturb your serenity,— may occasion you many misfortunes ; but you have a peaceful

ful conscience: while you possess that, you may rise superior to the calamities of life, which are sent as trials to a virtuous mind, to prepare it for undisturbed happiness hereafter; the body may be subdued by calamity, but an unclouded mind will carry its eye beyond this world, and look forward to the never-failing reward that attends a patient sufferer. Unhappiness, my good child, is only attached to guilt: unhappy *indeed* is that being whom the inward monitor condemns!"

Adelaide heard this short consolatory reproof with submissive attention, and was afterwards conducted to a small apartment adjoining the porterefs's rooms. Some confections were given her, and the good woman assured her, that, if she deserved the protection of the house, the abbess would never give her up to the power of any one against her inclinations. Those words sunk deep in her mind, "if she deserved;"—that *if* implied a doubt it was her duty to remove,

remove, and she determined the following day to make an unreserved communication to the abbess of her whole story, and implore her advice and direction for her future conduct.

For the remainder of that day she saw only one nun and a lay-sister, who attended her with great kindness,—bid her compose her mind and spirits against the next morning, when the abbess would again admit her, as she seemed to be much interested for her.

Perfectly secure from the machinations of Don Felix,—in an asylum no enemy could reach to injure her, one would naturally conclude that Adelaide enjoyed a sweet and refreshing rest, after all the tumults that had disturbed her; but, alas! it was far otherwise. Now fear no longer agitated, nor terror made her tremble at the smallest noise,—when laid down in her little room of eight feet square, silence pervading the
house,

house, and all apprehensions of her life and honour done away,—all stormy passions seemed at rest, and she began calmly to cast a retrospection over the various events that had befallen her, and from thence to consider her present situation, and future prospects.

The relation of Lesare had given birth to a variety of emotions. She felt gratified by the anxiety and attention of Lewis ; she placed it, no doubt, to the score of gratitude, yet still she was sensible of uncommon pleasure in the reflection, and exulted much in the idea that “ his hands had never been stained with blood,”—the observation of Lesare.

The fragment of the letter was the next thing that passed in review, which, she concluded was written by him ; there it was evident her safety was his chief concern ; but why could he not come into the neighbourhood of Estella, or what news could
the

the hermit of the Pyrenees have to tell her ? Unless what concerned him, she knew nothing the good father could be interested in on her account ; yet she felt increasing anxiety to know this “ good news,” at the same time that gratitude demanded her to return to the Marchioness.

After some hours of debate from the contending wishes of her heart, she settled it with a determination to write to the Marchioness every occurrence that had befallen her, and wait her answer before she took any decided step relative to the hermit. She closed not her eyes for the whole night, and arose in the morning more tranquil indeed, but languid and unrefreshed.

The lay-sister brought her some breakfast, after which she was ordered to attend the abbess.

She was not long in obeying this order, and entered the parlour with such a look
of

of reverence and complacency, as at once stamped her character in the opinion of that venerable lady, who was descended from one of the noblest families in Spain,—but that was her smallest boast. A very delicate state of health, in her juvenile years, had given her an uncommon serious turn of mind, and caused her to make the monastic life her preferable choice.

In this situation, her unaffected piety, sweetness of temper, real dignity of mind added to her high birth, had raised her to the government of that house, which was of the first respectability in the kingdom of Arragon. Universally beloved, she was equally respected and revered. A weak constitution in early youth had, by temperance, content, and harmony, been improved into a perfect good state of health, which she enjoyed with gratitude to her gracious Father, and constant endeavours to promote peace and happiness throughout all her community. With such an example, and such a disposition,

disposition, few, if any discontented minds existed in that peaceful retirement.

To a woman of this turn and nice discernment, the heart of Adelaide was legible in her face. She was more than beautiful; goodness illumined every feature; virtue was visible in her modest, but expressive eye.

“Come hither, my good child; (said the abbess, taking her hand,) are your misfortunes of a nature to be communicated?—may I ask your confidence? Do not misunderstand me; I have no claims to make; I wish not to pry into family-secrets: my best assistance you may rely on, if I know no more than that you are unfortunate, and want it;—that is a sufficient plea. There are situations when confidence ought to be withheld; perhaps there are secrets of others connected with your own, you have no
right

right to disclose, therefore, my dear, you are perfectly your own mistress."

"Honoured madam, (cried the grateful Adelaide,) I have not a thought I would wish to reserve from you; and, if you will have patience to hear a long detail of uncommon incidents and misfortunes, both inclination and duty demand an entire frankness from me, that I may be the more entitled to solicit the honour of your direction for my future benefit."

The good lady instantly gave orders that there should be no interruption, and, seating Adelaide, desired her to begin her narrative, which she entered upon as briefly as possible. But the dinner came before she had half gone through it, for frequently she stopped from emotion and fatigue, and was obliged to take refreshments during her pauses to support her spirits.

The lady-abbess, however, was so greatly interested in her story, that she retired im-

mediately after dinner to have the narrative continued, which Adelaide curtailed as much as she could, and finished that evening, quite exhausted by her exertions, and overcome by recapitulating so many painful circumstances.

The abbess, who, if she had a fault, (and who is perfect ?) it was a fondness for long tales, that she might indulge in the garrulity of age, by repeating them, with her own comments and observations, for the benefit of her whole community,—to draw conclusions, from other people's misfortunes, of the perfect happiness they derived in a seclusion from a world so abounding with evil.

The good lady was so surprised, so engaged in her attention to this long story, that scarcely a sentence dropped that was not imprinted on her memory, and laid up as a treasure in that storehouse, as a source
of

of much improvement for her auditory hereafter.

The natural goodness and benevolence of her heart interested her warmly for this persecuted young creature. She embraced her, a favour very rarely bestowed from the supérieure of a convent,

“ My amiable child, (said she,) I sincerely feel for you. You have indeed met with uncommon distresses, but every incident that has been related proves your heavenly Father has supported you through all your trials, and purified you by sufferings to know the blessings of a good conscience, and the happiness attendant on a perseverance in virtue.

“ Trust firmly in him, and believe every event, however distressing, is surely intended for your benefit, and will ultimately bring you to eternal felicity.—Roses cannot be gathered without thorns, and those thorns must remind you, that, in this imperfect

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state.

state, happiness is not attainable without many painful efforts, many concealed snares that attend the most flattering prospects ; and that only honour and virtue, a perfect confidence in your heavenly Father, and a perseverance in your religious duties, can procure peace in this world, and eternal happiness in the next. A full conviction of these truths, my dear child, will enable you to bear all the evils of this life, without sinking under the wrongs inflicted on you by wicked people."

Adelaide most readily subscribed to the truth and justice of her observations, and hoped the following day to profit more by her wisdom and goodness : being extremely fatigued with talking so many hours, she took a respectful leave, and retired to her small apartment.

The next morning, at the same hour, she waited on the lady-abbess, who voluntarily offered, through father Sebastian, (the confessor

fessor to the convent,) to have a messenger got, and sent to the hermit, and also to have a letter forwarded to the Marchioness de Gusman. These truly friendly offers were the height of Adelaide's wishes; she wrote both to the hermit and to the Marchioness, an account of her present situation, without being very particular as to the events that brought her to the convent, and signifying her intention of remaining there till she heard from her friend.

A day or two after she had sent off her letters, the shepherd called at the grate, and wished to see her. She went readily to him.

“Sad doings (said he) since you left us.— That same day the men came again, and searched every place most narrowly; even the thicket did not escape them; and from him, who seemed to command the others, I learned that the lord of the castle was very ill, and the doctor talked of cutting off his arm, which he said would break his mother's

heart, and many a fine lady's too; and he heartily wished the young woman could be found, that she might pay for all, or else that the devil had taken her before she came in his master's way.

“Where she had escaped to was surprising, but it was his belief she was in the convent, and, if so, the old nuns would hold her fast, without an order to give her up. He added, if I could gain any intelligence of the young woman, I should be handsomely rewarded, for that the loss of her seemed to hurt his lord more than the sad condition he was reduced to, and that, if he was not better in another day, he should send an express to Pampeluna, to his old master; for, if his arm was cut off, and he should die, more than one death would follow, and the young woman, if found, would lose her life for it, *as it was all through her.*”

“This (continued the shepherd) is terrible news for you. I hope you will not be discovered; you may depend upon me.”

“I

"I am much obliged to you, my friend, (said Adelaide,) and sincerely hope the gentleman's hurts are not so dangerous as his servant represents. Heaven forbid he should die. I shall never forget your kindness in procuring this asylum for me : here I have found a protectress, and a short time, I hope, will bring me friends ; mean while, if you can gain information of the gentleman's state of health, it will greatly tend to my peace."

"You may depend upon me to serve you to the best of my power," returned he, and then took leave. Adelaide went back to her room under much agitation of spirit ; for, ill as Don Felix had treated her, she could not support the idea of being the cause of his present dreadful state.

Under this anxiety she remained for two days without seeing the shepherd. The third he came : her heart sickened as she went to meet him, in dread of what intelligence he had to communicate. Happily

her fears were done away ; the man greeted her with a pleasant countenance.

“ The holy virgin be praised ! (said he ;) I went up last night to the castle, to inquire how our lord did, (for we are all his vassals,) and most luckily met with his gentleman, Mr. Sancho, the very man whom I had before seen at my cottage. He told me with much joy that things had taken a favourable turn ; the doctor hoped to save the arm, though they could not promise he would have the free use of it again as before ; that his fever was less, and all would be well again in time.

“ He was sorry (he said) now that he had sent to his old master, but he meant it for the best, and was just then going to send an express to court, to mention the accident which was likely to detain him for some time from thence.

“ He again asked if the young woman was heard of among us : I said no. He shook his head ;—Well, I hope we shall get her

her again yet, for all my lord's thoughts turn upon her, and we have several messengers about different ways to trace her. So I thought (concluded the shepherd) you would be glad to hear all this, and came off early this morning."

Adelaide was very sensible of his kindness, and quite cheered to hear that there were hopes of Don Felix's recovery. In this tolerable composed state, and in a safe asylum, we will leave her, and return to the Countess le Marr, whom we left designing to set off for Saragossa.

Mittand, who had no notion that Antoinette should be the only person benefited by this expedition into Spain, and profit by the fond folly of her lady, had, as we before observed, secured to her own use the money left by the ladies for her support in the house. The watch, snuff-box, and rings, which had at first been on the toilet, in the extremity of the Countess's disorder,

she had put up in a small dressing-box, unknown to the woman who was there to assist her : consequently this box was as convenient for her as the strong box had been to Antoine. She had an equal right to her share of the property, and he might as well incur the guilt of taking the whole, as of a greater part.

Those *little trifles*, she thought, might be of use to her, should any event deprive her of her mistress, and she was so well acquainted with the cunning and arts of Antoine, that she had no great apprehensions of his being taken, and brought back, since, among the mountains, it was difficult to trace, or follow, a resolute desperate man.— She held herself quite secure, therefore, in her *little* depredations, and beheld the agonies, mortifications, and sorrows, of the Countess with a well-counterfeited grief, and the most earnest protestations of fidelity and affection.

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But she was by no means desirous of going farther into Spain. A stranger to the language and customs, no acquaintance, no opportunities of displaying her own consequence, or of having lovers that she could understand, of what use would be her present *small* advantages in a strange country? The trinkets she had secreted were worth at least two hundred louis d'ors, perhaps half as much more. In France she could dispose of them; for, though the Countess had written to some friends to disperse advertisements with an account of the robbery she had sustained, yet she knew the little influence that lady now possessed there would render those inquiries very cold and trivial.

All those things she weighed in her mind, and wished much for an opportunity to leave her mistress, unless she could prevail with her to turn back into France.

The day previous to that on which she had fixed for her journey, the Countess was

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sitting

sitting in a disconsolate posture, revolving on her future projects : she dared not cast a retrospection on the past ;—there all was guilt, and a multiplicity of crimes, that made her shudder, if a thought of what *had been* came across her mind : she had sought to drown reflection by plunging into fresh dissipations, that might occupy her ideas ; and, after pining under a banishment from court, without any amusements, any mode of diversifying the tedious hours, and existing only in the hope that death, by delivering her from her persecutor, might restore her to the world.

When that hour arrived, when the mother of Francis, the Countess of Angoulême, was recalled to the world of spirits, and she depended on the humanity of the king to remit a punishment she had long groaned under, to her infinite mortification she found that monarch was too well acquainted with her worthlessness, (though not all her crimes,) to be at all inclined to
admit

admit her again at his court. He released her indeed from her strict confinement at the chateau, but forbid her approach to Paris, or within a hundred miles of the capital.

But the world was before her, and, infatuated still with an opinion of the graces of her person, and well acquainted with the captivating charms of her wit and manners, she concluded other kingdoms would deal more kindly by her ; and, as her fortune was not insignificant, though not large, she concluded she might yet extend her conquests, and pass her days with pleasure and éclat in another country, since her residence was proscribed in her own.

Such were the views with which she passed over the boundaries of the two kingdoms, and visited Spain.

Whether it were that her long solitude had at first given a more settled turn to her

her mind, or that the supreme delight she felt, on being followed and distinguished by Don Felix, had established him more in her good graces, certain it is, from whatever cause it proceeded, that this young nobleman had made an indelible impression on her heart, such as she had never before felt for any man, and far surpassing the fatal passion she had conceived for the Count de Beauvais.

What then must this unhappy woman not feel of misery and distress, to be abandoned, despised by the lord of her affections!—to know that her guilt, respecting the Countess de Beauvais, was discovered,—that the Count had outlived the intended effect of her wicked accusations,—had since perished by assassins, after living years so very near to her castle; and that the girl she had taken from the mountains should prove to be the daughter of that unfortunate pair she had destroyed, who, by engaging the affections of Don Felix, had planted daggers in
her

her heart, and would, in all probability, be restored to the honours of her family, to her forfeited estates, and triumph over the cruel calumniators who had brought destruction on her ever-regretted parents.

Overwhelmed by such retrospections, who could wish a guilty wretch a punishment more severe than conscience must inflict at such a moment, when, without a friend to sooth her sorrows, debilitated by sickness, abandoned by those she loved, betrayed and robbed by the servant in whom she had placed unlimited confidence, who was master of her dearest secrets, and whom, though she had been obliged to make some shew of detecting, she in reality wished might never be found, for in bringing him to justice she must seal her own ruin.

What a deplorable state had this woman reduced herself to by her vices and crimes! She talked of going to Saragossa: what was she to do there? Could a tour through
Spain.

Spain afford a jaundiced eye like her's amusement or information? Alone, a stranger, obliged to wait for remittances, and dependent on the courtesy of persons but little known?—Impossible! Her heart had undergone a great change with her attachment to Don Felix: she was humbled in her own eyes; she could no longer hope to derive pleasure from travelling; only one sentiment occupied her mind, to recover the attentions of her lover, and tear him from Adelaide; but where they could be found, or what methods to pursue, to accomplish this darling wish, she knew not.

Plunged in these reveries, she was found by Mittand, who, after some conscious hesitations, prefaced what she had to say, by exclaiming against the extortions of the Spaniards, post-masters in particular.

“Nothing but troubles and sorrows, madam, (said she,) have attended us in this vile country, barren, mountainous, and unfriendly.

friendly. I wish to heaven you would return to France, and proceed no farther here; besides, I don't believe Signior Don Felix is in Spain."

"It is very unlikely he should be any where else, (returned the Countess, starting at his name;) he is in the king's service, and cannot leave the kingdom."

"Then I am sure, if I was so great and beautiful as you, I would leave him, and the kingdom too. A desert in France is better than any city here,—a poor, proud, deceitful pack as they are!"

"I have no cause to complain against any one but Felix, (said the Countess,) and France abounds with as much pride, insolence, poverty, and deceit, as can be met with in Spain."

"I am very sorry, madam, (returned Mittand, throwing much grief into her countenance, and calling up the ready tears to her eyes,) I am very much grieved if you should determine to go on; for, in truth,
I cannot

I cannot be happy out of France, after living so long confined, as I may say, at the castle, seeing only mountains and the sea. I hoped to have had some pleasure, but now I understand nobody, nobody will understand me. Antoine is gone, and you are going to have a nasty Spanish fellow ; I can't bear it, indeed I can't, and therefore I must find my way back to France as well as I can, if you won't go.—Do, dear madam, return to France.”

The Countess heard her curious harangue with an astonishment no words can describe, and without offering to interrupt her. When she stopped, regarding her with a fixed look, that threw confusion into the face of Mit-tand, “ Is it possible ! (said she,)— do I hear you right ?—can *you* resolve to desert me too !—a mistress whose indulgence has been, I may say, unexampled ;— will you leave her in her present weak state of body and mind ?—now, at such a time, leave her without a friend or attendant !”

“ No,

“No, madam, (answered she, stammering,) not if you will please to go back ; but, indeed, (gathering courage as she went on,) I cannot go forward into Spain.”

“And how, pray, are you to return into France, if *I do not go ?*”

“O madam ! the post-boys return from here to Roussillon continually ; they will take care of me.”

“You are distracted, Mittand, (said the Countess, mildly, though almost agonized by the suppression of her rage ;)—a woman to trust herself with post-boys! — never was such a thing heard of : besides, you know I cannot now pay you your wages, and therefore by what means can you travel so many miles, and how are you to subsist, when you come to France, almost as much a stranger there as here ?”

These were questions the waiting-woman was by no means prepared to answer, and, though very natural ones, had never expected. Knowing her own riches, she had forgotten

forgotten her mistress was a stranger to them, and believed she had no money, but had expended every shilling in the house.—Struck dumb, and confounded, she gazed on the Countess, without being able to articulate a syllable. Though little disposed to mirth, and sensibly feeling the ingratitude of Mittand, that lady could not refrain from smiling at her air of astonishment.

“ I see (said she) the trifling object of money never once occurred to you ; yet, knowing well my circumstances, I should have supposed it would have been the first thing to have been considered. Thus much I will tell you, that I feel little inclined to go my intended tour; and, if I obtain any credit at Saragossa, I will dispatch a messenger to Estella, inquire if Adelaide is there with the Marchioness, or governor, and also if Donna Padilla has left the country or not. I will send another man to Madrid, to Don Diego, and know if the cruel Felix is at court ; and, if I receive any satisfactory answer,

answer on these points, I may either return to France, or furnish *you* with the means of doing it, as henceforth I can no more consider you in the light of a faithful affectionate attendant, but as a servant who considers only her own interest, and will feel no regret in leaving a too-indulgent mistress, enfeebled by sickness and sorrow, to gratify her own selfish inclination.

“Leave me, Mittand, (added she, after a long pause, the other still incapable of speaking,) leave me!—There is no longer confidence between us: you are only my servant till I have the means of discharging you.”

She turned from her in an agony; it was one of the bitterest moments of her life, for she saw that she was equally indifferent and deserted by all she had obliged. Such is the fate of guilt, when its associates can no longer hope to derive benefit from their attachment,

attachment, or have made it their interest to desert them.

Mittand, self-convicted, disappointed, not daring to avow her ability for defraying her travelling expences,—seeing that, like most other cunning people, she had over reached herself, and lost for ever the favour of the Countess, without being able to obtain the points her heart was set upon, and that she had adopted a wild scheme, equally ridiculous and impracticable,—felt herself in the most uncomfortable situation possible, obliged to remain where she was, coldly regarded by her lady, her usual loquacity prohibited by disdainful glances and contemptuous monosyllables, and incapable of making herself amends by conversing with others.

Thus passed the remainder of that day on the side of Mittand. The friendly doctor came to see the Countess, and to him she mentioned her uncertain and very unpleasant situation,

situation, the disappointment and ingratitude she had experienced, and the incertitude of her future plans. He, finding she was really a woman of rank and fortune, ill treated by a lover, and robbed by her servant, made her an offer of his house for her accommodation, till she could have remittances, and offered to send off the different messengers she wished for.

Delighted with a proposal so calculated to save trouble, fatigue, and anxiety, she did not hesitate in the acceptance of it; and, on hearing of Mittand's behaviour, he advised her by all means to discharge her: he would advance the money, and, giving her up to the inconveniences she had chosen unthinkingly for herself, would, he thought, be a deserved punishment for her ingratitude.

The Countess, who now hated her in proportion as she had less to fear, and nothing to hope from her, in a foreign country,
readily

readily acquiesced with his opinion, and he promised to procure an attendant for her at his house, and also a man-servant. Early the next morning he brought to her the money she wanted, having previously written to Don Diego, at Madrid, the steps he had taken, and waited to attend her to his house, which was situated in a small village, about a mile from Tudella, at the foot of a hill, in a beautiful romantic valley, intersected with little rivulets and clumps of trees.

Mittand, who was kept perfectly ignorant of this arrangement, was called up to finish the packing and cording of her lady's trunks. She obeyed with a mortified air, concluding they were going to Saragossa.

When that business was finished, she was beginning to collect her own clothes, and said she should very soon be ready.

“There

"There is no sort of occasion to hurry *yourself*, (said the Countess coldly,) you do not accompany me."

"How, madam ! (said she, starting,)—not attend you !"

"No : I am going to this gentleman's house, and have servants provided for me. Here are your wages, (tendering the money,) and you are now free, as you desired, to go where, and with whom you please."

Thunderstruck at an arrangement she had never dreamed of, and shocked at the grant of her own wishes, she stood in a fixed posture, her mouth half open, and eyes starting from their sockets, but without speaking, so extreme was her surprise.

"I am ready, sir, to attend you, (said the Countess ;—turning to Mittand,) farewell ; I have complied with your own request to discharge you. There is your money, and I wish you well."

Giving her hand to the doctor, she descended, leaving her quondam favourite still fixed and silent, until she could no longer see her mistress, and then she fell into a violent hysteric laugh, that disordered her a good deal; but, on recovery, she had the art to make the people believe it was a laugh of triumph for the success of her scheme, that she might return to France.

The little she could make them understand to the disadvantage of her lady she did, and the post-master was not sorry to get rid of her. The next thing was to get a conveyance for Mittand; but, as she had money, he was in no haste to set her off, and therefore she must wait till some French people came that way, or post-boys returning, which rarely happened. The Countess and her faithful confidante being thus disposed to wait for casual assistance, each bearing hatred to the other, we will return to Adelaide.

Three times a week the shepherd never failed to call upon her at the convent, and constantly gave her an account of the fluctuating state of Don Felix, whose agitation of spirits considerably retarded the progress of his health. He found all his sufferings were insufficient to drive the image of Adelaide from his heart : she grew dearer to him every hour. The uncertainty of her fate gave him unspeakable disquietude, and every day fresh messengers were sent for intelligence.

Sancho, who had long ago given her to the devil, for giving them so much trouble, was under some concern on another account. He had sent an express to Pampeluna when he thought his master must die, and now he hourly expected Don Diego and Donna Maria : he did not dare to tell his master, lest he should be quitting the castle, a step that might prove fatal in his very weak state.

The old shepherd, who seemed so anxious for his lord's health, he employed as a spy upon the road, to give him the earliest intelligence of their approach, and by this means Adelaide not only heard the progress of Don Felix's cure, but also that Don Diego and his lady were hourly expected.

She also, from day to day, looked for the return of her messengers, and her heart was in a continual flutter to know what interesting information she was to obtain from the hermit, for it would be a folly to deny but that she believed and hoped it related to Lewis, and that Lewis, from the hints dropped by Lesare, was warmly attentive to her safety, and had certainly, from the superior advantages of education Lesare had mentioned, been brought up, if not born, a gentleman.

Indulging this idea, he was always before her in that weak interesting state she had left him in the cavern. Compassion gave him

him an interest in her heart, greater than she was aware of, and she cherished the sentiment because she thought it was a virtuous one. The lady-abbess continued her unabating kindness : the ease and tranquil lives of the nuns insensibly eradicated that early prejudice she had imbibed against a monastic life, and she thought *if she was* to remain in the convent for ever it would not be very repugnant to her inclinations.

One day, after paying her morning-devoirs to the lady-abbess, she was strolling in the cloisters, meditating on the many vicissitudes she had experienced, when a lay-sister came to inform her the Marchioness de Gusman waited for her in the parlour.—Transported, she flew rather than walked, and threw herself into the arms of her dear friend, without observing any one else was present. My sweet child ! my dear Adelaide ! my beloved, my dear benefactress ! were all the words either could articulate,

till the first transports of their meeting were over.

Then, and not till then, she heard a voice not unknown to her say, "And may not I too congratulate my amiable friend and myself on this happy meeting?"

She turned; it was the governor, Don Lopez. She held out her hand with the utmost frankness. "Pardon me, my dear sir, if joy at seeing my beloved Marchioness made me inattentive to you, my first friend! Ah! (said she, tears of gratitude flowing down her cheeks,) what do I not owe to you both! How kind, how good, to follow thus an unfortunate orphan, who has only a grateful heart to tender for all the inestimable favours you honour her with."

"And that heart, my love, (said the Marchioness, pressing her hand,) is all we wish for.—Thank heaven you are found;—but I am dying with desire to know by whom you were carried away, and all that has

has happened to you : this, however, we must postpone, for I am impatient to take you from hence. We can reach Iacca this evening, where we will rest a day or two."

This reminded Adelaide that she expected the return of another messenger every moment. Rather embarrassed, she said, "I cannot explain to you, dearest madam, now, all particulars, but I impatiently wait the result of an inquiry I have sent to the Southern Pyrenees on the French side. It may be of consequence to me, how then can I leave the convent?"

"Iacca is not far distant; (answered the Marchioness.) Whatever may be the business, a messenger can soon follow you there. Indeed, my dear Adelaide, I cannot part with you again. You must settle the matter as I propose."

"I will consult the lady-abbess, my dear madam," answered she.

"Oh! by all means introduce me to her. You speak handsomely of her: does

she still continue to deserve your good report?"

"Indeed she does, (said Adelaide,) and will be happy to see my friends."

Away she flew, blithe as a bird, to the abbess, and related what had passed. The venerable lady partook of her joy, and requested to see her friends. They were introduced to her, as she returned with Adelaide to the parlour. She spoke warmly in praise of her protégée; they were charmed with her politeness and urbanity, so rarely found in convents, and consulted her respecting the difficulty started by Adelaide of the messenger she expected.

"My dear child, (said the good lady,) however pleased I am with your society, I am not so selfish as to form a wish for detaining you here one moment unnecessarily. The messenger, arrive when he will, shall follow you to Iacca, if you stay there, or any place you shall appoint. Depend upon
my

my wish, and zeal to serve you. Had a monastic life been your choice, I should have regarded you particularly as my own; but, while you have attachments in the world, respectable friends who love you, I cease to wish for a change that proceeds not from a preferable regard. Preserve your honour, your integrity, and that generous frankness, the sure criterion of an innocent heart. Persevere in the paths of virtue, and heaven, by placing you in a situation where example may illustrate precept, and active goodness benefit your fellow-creatures, may design you as a pattern for others, more extensively useful than if shut up between these walls. To the protection of the holy virgin I commit you, and my prayers and blessings shall attend you."

"Dearest madam, (cried Adelaide, kneeling, and kissing her hand,) I know full well how to appreciate both. Piety and goodness like your's must make prayers efficacious, and it shall be my peculiar care not

to counteract them by any conduct disgraceful to the regard you honour me with."

A very tender leave was taken between Adelaide and her convent-friends. When they were about to depart, she said to the Marchioness, "There is one family in the village I wish to see, for to them I am chiefly indebted for the happiness I now enjoy."

"By all means, (said the Governor, with much vivacity ;) let us see those friends, for they are our's also."

She felt the kindness of the expression, and, directing the servants to the shepherd's cottage, she simply told them that she had been there preserved from the greatest evils, and that they had procured for her an asylum in the convent.

An elegant equipage, stopping at their hut; alarmed the shepherd, his wife, and daughter; but, when they saw Adelaide descend, they run to meet her. She embraced

Braced them all, told them the happy change in her circumstances, for which, she said, she was entirely indebted to their kindness and hospitality. She introduced them to her friends, and both the Marchioness and Governor gave them handsome marks of their bounty.

Overcome by such gracious condescension and generosity, the whole family sobbed aloud the gratitude that oppressed them.— They were rich for life, they said, and were ashamed to receive so much.

“ You owe us nothing, (returned the Marchioness.) Your natural goodness of heart deserves more than we can give. Remember, that a good action never goes without a reward, and that to succour the unfortunate and afflicted will always draw down blessings on yourselves and families.”

“ But we did so little, (cried the woman, shaking her head,) we had so little in our power.”

M 6

“ What

“What could be done for me you did, (replied Adelaide,) and at the risk of your own safety: the richest man in the kingdom could do no more; few, very few perhaps would do so much.”

While the Marchioness again spoke kindly to them, Adelaide inquired aside of the shepherd about Don Felix.

“I was a coming to-morrow, (said he,) to tell you that he is not so well again, but has got what they call a low fever, and is very melancholy, but they think it is because he is vexed to lose the use of his arm, which, as his man said, will be a sad thing to a handsome proper gentleman; but then it might have been his life, and so I think he ought to be thankful, instead of being sorry.”

She felt some concern for the state Don Felix had reduced himself to by his follies, but, so as his life was not in danger, she was tolerably reconciled, and, having taken
a kind

a kind leave of her cottage-friends, (who blessed the day they had first seen her, and resolved annually to celebrate it, and drink her health,) they proceeded on to Iacca. The Marchioness and her brother were both desirous to hear Adelaide's relation.

The governor had said very little, but his silence had something in it so expressive and respectful, that it could not fail of making a great impression on the grateful Adelaide. He had not seen her since reading her Memoir, and knowing her birth. It was impossible he could love or respect her more than before he attained that knowledge, but it threw his hopes at a greater distance; it inspired a sort of reverence due to her rank, and the misfortunes of her family; and those offers, which, heretofore, he had considered as justly merited by her amiable conduct, he now conceived were rejected by her from a consciousness of her rank

rank in society, and an idea of his inferiority.

He had never intended urging her more on the subject of his passion, but he pleased himself with the idea that she gave him credit for generosity and disinterestedness, though his person, and the difference in their ages, precluded his claims to her affection. Now he saw things differently:—his esteem, and offers of his hand, conferred no honour, claimed no gratitude, for he was inferior to her in every respect.

Under these impressions, he beheld her again, with transport indeed, but with a difference, an awe, that repelled the expressions his heart dictated, and it was only with his eyes that he spoke that joy and tenderness which overflowed at his heart.

They had no sooner arrived at the post-house at Iacca, than the impatient Marchioness demanded an account of the events subsequent

subsequent to her morning-ramble in the garden. Before I enter upon my story, (returned she,) you must give me your words of honour that you will never, in any shape, resent for me, or injure the person who I must complain of. He already suffers for his errors, and I must entreat that they may not be remembered against him, so as to provoke resentment or retaliation."

"Fear not, madam, (answered Don Lopez;) your commands are sacred. I may detest and despise the man, but his life is safe, if you protect it."

"This assurance (said she) is a fresh proof of kind friendliness to me, and is another claim upon my gratitude."

She then entered upon, and gave a succinct account of each circumstance between her and Don Felix, during which the Governor started from his chair once or twice, and bit his lips with passion, but he spoke not till she had concluded her story.

"You

“ You did well, madam, (said he,) to demand the safety of Don Felix. By heavens I would have died, or have scattered him to atoms !—The loss of an arm,—how poor a compensation for what you suffered !”

“ My dear brother, (returned the Marchioness,) do not indulge a vindictive or revengeful disposition, but own that his punishment is severe. He has for ever lost the object of his affections, incurred her hatred and contempt, is entangled in his own snares, and at a time of life, and with a person formed to please, must suffer the mortification of carrying about an useless limb, the cause of which he can never acknowledge, must blush to have noticed, and is incapable of evermore serving his king or his country. Reflect on all this, good brother, and confess that the worthless man is deservedly and sufficiently punished.”

“ You have a strong manner of placing things in whatever point of view you please, (answered he ;) that he suffers deservedly I am
willing

willing to allow, but nothing short of life can atone, in my opinion, for the injuries offered to your sweet friend."

"Without disputing the point your friendship and gallantry suggests, (said Adelaide,) I am apt to think a vain gallant youth, like Don Felix, will consider his disgraceful appearance as more painful than death, and I do assure you that I cannot help feeling much regret that he is likely for ever to reproach me as the cause of his sufferings and degradation. But let us have done with him, and remember only the fresh obligations he has laid me under to my beloved friends, in bringing them thus far to recover their grateful Adelaide."

This gave a new turn to the conversation, and many polite and affectionate things were said on all sides; every one was anxious for the return of the messenger from the hermit, and strove to amuse themselves in visiting the convents, and rambling round the
environs

environs of Iacca, though there was little to engage curiosity, or divert the eye.

Adelaide saw with extreme pain an uncommon pensiveness steal over the features of the Governor: his sister had mentioned his distraction when he first heard of her being carried off, his subsequent journies round every avenue that led from the wood, the numberless messengers he had unsuccessfully employed, and his return to her, quite dispirited and in despair, the day previous to that on which her messenger arrived.

“ To form a judgment of his feelings for your loss, you must have seen him when the courier arrived, (said the Marchioness;) I really feared for his head, nor could have formed any idea how dangerous it is with some people to feel joy in excess, till I witnessed his transports. I believe, my dear Adelaide, you will do me justice on the score of affection for you, and give me credit

dit for the happiness I felt in the prospect of having you restored to us ; but, indeed, the passions of men are so wild and extravagant, that my sober brother gave way to the intoxication of the moment, and was more than half mad.

“ Now his disorder has taken a different turn ; for, instead of being gay and animated by your presence, he looks dejected, pale, and thoughtful. Ah ! my sweet Adelaide, he wants that fortitude and resolution I should have expected from my brother. How often has he read lessons to me on those subjects : he feels now the difference between theory and practice.”

The observations were very distressing to Adelaide, because they were but too just, and gave her real concern. She wished to return with the Marchioness, that they might be separated from the Governor, at the same time condemning herself for insensibility and ingratitude.

They

They had now been at Iacca six days; no intelligence had arrived from the convent, and Adelaide began to despair of receiving any. She was ashamed to keep her friends waiting there, and told them so.

“Indeed, (said the Marchioness,) I wish we had taken the journey ourselves, I should have liked it exceedingly.”

“But I could not have accompanied you without previous leave from court, (returned the Governor,) and you could not travel alone. A few days more will certainly make you easy, or, if you please, I will go to the convent alone.”

“Not for worlds! (cried Adelaide, who dreaded his going into the neighbourhood of Don Felix.) It could answer no purpose going there, nor will we wait after to-morrow; I can write to the lady-abbess, and letters will follow us.”

She rose up, saying this, and withdrew into a small grove of chestnuts, behind the
house,

house, where she sometimes stole to, when willing to enjoy a quarter of an hour alone.

She had not long been out of the room before the Marchioness was told a person on horseback inquired for her ; she gave orders for his admittance.

“ You come from the French Pyrenees, do you not ?” said she.

“ Yes, madam ; but last from the convent of St. Mary.—There is a letter.”

She saw it was directed to herself, and was surprised ; hastily opening it, the contents were these.

Madam,

PREPARE your amiable young friend for good and unexpected news :—*her father lives !* though he at present wanders in unknown places : it is supposed he is tracing the route of the Countess le Marr. Chance discovered to the hermit, and another person,

5

interested

interested for Adelaide, that she was in your castle, and under your protection; but this information came after the Count de Beauvais had left the hermit, who hopes that worthy and unfortunate nobleman will be guided by the hand of Providence to the embraces of his amiable daughter.

“I thought it best, madam, to write to you, that you might act as appears best for the repose and happiness of your friend. I commend you all to the protection of the Holy Virgin, and my prayers will be offered to the throne of Grace for your eternal happiness.

THE ABBESS OF ST. MARY.

“Just and merciful God! (cried the Marchioness,) how wonderful are thy ways, how gracious thy dispensations!—Unexpected news indeed!—How shall I prepare the dear girl for such delightful tidings!”

She

She had forgotten the presence of the messenger ; she thought not of her brother, who stood amazed at her exclamations, till the man, seeing she had finished reading, said, "I was desired, madam, to acquaint you, by a shepherd whom I met at the convent-gate, as I was receiving this letter, that the father, mother, and sister, of the sick gentleman at the castle arrived there yesterday and that the gentleman continues but indifferent."

"I thank you, (said she.) Withdraw, if you please : I will soon reward your diligence."

The man retired. Don Lopez had just looked over the letter : "Most sincerely I rejoice at your friend's happy prospects, though she will be lost to us, for, doubtless, when the Count finds her, they will return to their own country."

"We will not anticipate evil, (answered the Marchioness,) nor suffer any selfish consideration to interfere in the happiness of a person

perion we love. I had begun to consider her as a child sent by Providence to restore in some degree my lost peace. Brother, I shall feel another painful stroke; *my* prospects of comfort soon vanish into air, but I must submit to the rod of correction without repining. Let us now think only of Adelaide."

They consulted for some time how to break this momentous event to her, trembling for the consequences of her extreme sensibility. After walking for near an hour, she returned rather oppressed, from the painful recollections that obtruded on her mind.

For some time every one seemed occupied by their own thoughts. At length, said the Governor, "I hope our expected messenger will arrive before this time to-morrow."

"I rather wish than expect it, (replied Adelaide,) for sure his absence has been unreasonably long."

"But

“ But should he bring good news, we will forgive him, (returned the Marchioness.) I confess I am much puzzled to conjecture what this news can allude to. Sometimes I indulge very extravagant and unlikely ideas.”

“ Of what nature, dear madam ?” asked Adelaide.

“ Why, forgive me for touching on the subject, but I could almost think it possible——only that you seem so *sure* of the contrary, that there may exist a probability that——but why should I mention my extravagant visions ?”

“ Dear madam, (cried she again, much agitated,) pray tell me what these visions are ?”

“ Promise me your pardon for speaking on the afflicting subject, (returned her friend,) but really I am sometimes inclined to believe that Providence might wonderfully interfere, and that your father——”

"Gracious God! (exclaimed Adelaide, starting from her seat,) my father! — what, O what of my father!"

"Do not thus alarm yourself, my dear girl, I may be wrong,— I may be right, in believing, in hoping that this promised news relates to him, and that his valuable life, by some unforeseen means, may have been preserved.

Adelaide, who was standing, was now seized with a fit of trembling. She sunk back in her chair. "Tell me, (said she, faintly,) you would not raise false hopes."

"Then, my dearest child, compose yourself, and prepare to hear good news *indeed!*"

Before the last word had quite reached her ear, she gave a deep sigh, and would have fallen on the floor, had not the governor, who had attentively watched her, caught her in his arms.

Water, and the usual remedies, soon recalled her to life. She looked unutterable things ;

things ; she gasped for breath, but could not speak.

“ My dearest love, my amiable child ! (said the kind Marchioness, kissing her cheek,) do not sink under joy, after so nobly bearing sorrow : no happiness is quite perfect. Your noble father does live, and is now in search of you. That beneficent Being, who has so wonderfully raised him from the bed of death, will, in his own good time, restore you to each other.”

No words can describe the look, the inimitable action of Adelaide, when, turning her fine eyes to heaven, and raising her clasped hands, her lips only moved, but her whole countenance seemed illumined, beaming with unutterable joy and gratitude to heaven ;—words would have been superfluous, —it was her heart that spoke. The Governor had poured out a glass of wine ; he requested she would drink it : she took the glass, looked first at the one, and then at the

other, "My father, my father, will thank you!" she cried, and fell into a strong convulsion.

They were terrified to death ; the fit held her long, and, when she recovered, she was so weak and ill, that they were obliged to put her immediately to bed. The Governor was distracted, his sister little better, but some drops that she procured took effect. She fell into a sweet sleep for several hours, and, to their inexpressible joy, waked composed, and able to speak. She requested particulars ; the letter from the abbess was given to her ; she read it with unspeakable transports, pressed it to her lips,—to her heart, and several times looked with grateful reverence towards heaven.

When she had read it over a dozen times, still thinking she should discover more on every reading, she embraced the Marchioness,—she held out her hand to the Governor.

"My

“My best beloved friends, (said she,) O how I rejoice!—my father!—Great God, I thank thee! I have a father who will bless you both for this goodness to his Adelaide! Oh! how you will love him! He will find us: I hope God will grant me patience, and resignation to wait his own good time for our meeting,—but every hour will appear an age.—I shall see him, however; I know I shall: God never does things by halves.”

They saw she was not quite composed enough to talk much upon the subject, and therefore changed it, by telling her of the arrival at the castle of Don Diego, and his family. “Ah! (said she,) I wish I could see Donna Isabella; her artful brother confessed to me he had intercepted my letters to her. I thought she would not voluntarily neglect me.”

“I sent forward the letter you committed to *my* care,” said Don Lopez.

"I doubt it not, (answered she;) you are all goodness to me; how my dear father will love you for it!

"But why do we remain here now?—If he follows the Countess he will be at Estella, perhaps at your house. Let us go.—O that Countess!—I had forgotten, should they meet, what might be the consequence. Little does he think who the Countess le Marr is.—Cruel woman! *she* made sure work:—we cannot raise my mother from the grave.—Wretch that she is, how great will be her condemnation!"

The Marchioness saw her head and heart were still a little disturbed, she therefore requested she would go to bed, and the following day they would depart for Estella.

"I believe (said she) it will be best for me to retire for the remainder of the day; I feel a confusion in my head not quite right. I am a weak creature, but consider I am young, and never expected to find a
father

father again in this world. Forgive me therefore if I behave improperly ; joy has been too much for me ; I am not used to it : sorrow has been more familiar ; but I have done with it now, and to-morrow I shall be quite well."

The Marchioness would not permit her to talk any more : she went to bed, and her good friend remained with her for the whole day and night, and had the pleasure to see she enjoyed a comfortable sleep.

They met the next morning with eagerness and delight on all sides. Adelaide appeared quite a new creature ; joy, hope, and expectation, had illumined her features ; her sweet expressive eyes darted uncommon radiance ; her cheeks were enlivened by a beautiful bloom ; the agitations of the preceding day had worn off, and left only the traces of an emotion that seemed to give animation to every look and action. Her friends partook of the happi-

ness she seemed to feel, and she gratefully observed it.

“ My beloved Marchioness, *my dear Governor*, how much am I indebted to you both for these marks of affection and friendship ! I scarcely remember any part of my behaviour yesterday, but I am sure I caused some trouble and anxiety : even now it appears like a pleasing vision, that I dare not flatter myself will be realized ; nor can I entirely shake off doubt and wonder, until I know through what means the life of my dear-parent was preserved ; little less than a miracle could have saved him.”

“ It is sufficient for your peace, (answered the Marchioness,) to know that the fact is established, and a short time now, I hope, will elucidate every thing to your satisfaction.”

Don Lopez had not spoken. The expression of “ *dear Governor*,” and the look that accompanied those words, had penetrated

trated to his heart, filled his bosom with the most tender emotions, and he observed with rapture that the reserve she had maintained towards him wore off, and that every look seemed directed by regard and tenderness.

He endeavoured to check his too-lively emotions, and therefore was a niggard of his words, lest they should betray the feelings of his heart.

Adelaide, who still preserved a grateful regard for Isabella, and thought it possible the increased disorder of Don Felix might arise from repentance, and the uncertainty of her fate, wrote a few lines to that young lady, in which she said, "that she had been at Iacca with the Marchioness de Gusman, and was now about to return with that lady to her country-house; and, having accidentally heard of her arrival in Arragon, she wrote to entreat the favour of hearing from her, having much to communicate of happiness to herself; if, as she hoped, Donna

Isabella still preserved an interest for her welfare, she would rejoice to hear that she had recovered a father."

"Are you not apprehensive (asked the Marchioness, to whom she communicated her letter) that Don Felix, knowing where you are to be found, will conceive some new project for disturbing you?"

"Indeed I am not, (answered she;) he suffers so severely for his unwarrantable behaviour, that I am inclined to believe sickness will produce remorse, and that he will feel more pleasure in the knowledge of my safety than in an improper desire to profit by the confidence I repose in his sister."

"I admire this candour, (returned her friend,) and hope your generous confidence and trust will not be misplaced; if he has not a callous heart, he will feel the full force of your generous conduct and silence on the subject of his insults: it will be the criterion of his virtue, for, if he possesses any greatness of soul, he will freely acknowledge his errors to Donna Isabella. If

he is *silent* on the subject, and pretends to imitate your discretion, I shall think little of his repentance, and less of his honour."

"Well, (returned Adelaide,) I at least fulfil the debt of gratitude owing to Isabella for her kind intentions to serve me: that they were fruitless was not her fault, and it would be selfish in me to feel the less regard for the intention, because I was not benefited from it."

"You are an amiable good girl, (said the Marchioness, embracing her :) cherish those sentiments, my dear Adelaide. A grateful and frank heart is the spontaneous production of a virtuous mind. Many estimable qualities are acquired from education and instruction, but generosity and candour spring from a nobler source."

Every thing being prepared for their journey, they left Iacca to cross the country for Estella, the delighted Adelaide indulging hope that every league would bring her nearer to her father; for she doubted not

but he would trace her to the house of the Marchioness, as he would learn at Estella that she was no longer resident with the Countess le Marr.

They travelled rather expeditiously, and, on the second day, passing through a wood between Arragon and Navarre, at the foot of a mountain, they saw before them, in the narrow road, a carriage broken down, two women on the ground, and a man endeavouring to help them, while another was examining the carriage.

Humanity would have impelled them to go to their assistance wherever they had been, but here they impeded them from proceeding, the road being narrow, and the underwood too thick to pierce through.—The Governor galloped up to the ladies, while the Marchioness and Adelaide alighted, and walked after him.

As

As they advanced, and saw him leap from his horse to assist them, they observed he stepped back, as if surprised, or shocked. They quickened their pace ; he met them. " Be not surprised, (said he ;) it is Donna Padilla and her woman. You are sufficiently revenged on your enemies, (added he to Adelaide ;) I fear she has broken her leg, and is otherwise much hurt."

The ladies, without speaking, went up to her. She was a stranger to the Marchioness, and had shrieked out when she beheld the Governor ; how much more was she agonized on beholding Adelaide, who, with a compassionate look and voice, said, " Do not be terrified, madam ; here are only persons desirous of giving you every possible assistance."

" From *you* ! (said she, clapping her hand before her eyes,) favours from *you* !— I will die first. Leave me instantly ! (cried she, in a voice agitated by pain and vexation,) if *you can forgive, I cannot cease to*
hate

hate the author of my misery and disgrace!—
Go, go! (she exclaimed,) your presence is worse than death!"

Poor Adelaide was extremely shocked. She could not bear the idea of being an object of hatred, nor the supposed cause of any one's unhappiness: she shrunk back, however, and requested her friend to see what could be done for this unhappy vindictive woman.

The Governor, though exceedingly hurt and disgusted with her behaviour to the good-natured Adelaide, yet could not be so devoid of humanity to any human being, however worthless, as not to do all in his power to avert the consequences of her misfortune. Her woman fortunately was not hurt: she and the Marchioness examined her leg, while the Governor and servants assisted in raising the chaise, which had received but little damage. The wind had broken off a large branch from a tree, which, falling

falling in the road, had been unperceived by the driver, but startled the horses, who, running on one side against the mountain, had thrown out Donna Padilla and her companion, and falling against the broken tree, she had been considerably hurt. Her leg indeed was not broken they believed, but so much sprained, that she could not put it to the ground; it swelled much, and she groaned with anguish. They were full five miles from a village, the road rough and rocky, and she was so much bruised, that the least motion or touch made her scream.

The consternation was great on all sides; her natural impatience of temper considerably increased by the accident, and the fight of Adelaide with the Governor, wrought her to a degree of madness. She raved with such violence, that the affrighted Marchioness drew back disgusted and terrified.

The Governor thought it high time to exert himself. "Madam, (said he,) my
sister

sister and I wish to to serve you, to alleviate, if possible, what you may suffer from this accident ; but, if such intemperate language is continued, we must leave you. You have insulted the most amiable and forgiving of her sex : do not proceed in this manner, or be assured you will deaden every feeling of compassion, and be deprived of all assistance."

" *You*, (cried she in an agony of body and mind, *you* are the cause of all my sorrows and misfortunes, perfidious ungrateful man !"

" All perfidy I disclaim, (answered he coldly,) and, if I am ungrateful, blame your own conduct : I might have esteemed, tho' I could not love you. But this is not a time to recriminate ; we must get you into a carriage, and proceed slowly, where you can have proper help."

This authoritative and cold manner struck daggers to her heart ; she was choaked with

with a variety of emotions, and threw her head violently against the ground.

Her woman struggled with her, and with other assistance lifted her into the chaise.— The Marchioness requested her brother, that he would attend and support her, as the woman was not sufficient to guard against her extravagancies. He complied, though not with a good grace ; he would have sacrificed every thing to have assisted the poorest of God's creatures ; but a woman who would have disgraced her sex, her birth, and every thing dear to woman, by the unbounded unbridled licentiousness of her passions, he despised too much to feel even pity for the hurts she had sustained.

He entered the carriage with her, however, and was obliged to support her in his arms, for she could not sit upright. The ladies followed in their own chaise, going on to the village Donna Padilla had left when she met with the accident. She suffered an
infinity

infinity of pain in every movement : the anguish from her bruises abated the turbulence of her passions, and she grew very low and faint by the time they arrived at a place where she could have medical assistance.

A surgeon soon made his appearance ; he pronounced with great importance, that no limbs were broken, but that the case was far worse than a broken limb ; the lady was very fortunate in falling into such good hands as himself, who was so competent to the care of bruises,—perhaps inward hurts ; all his patients did well in a short time, too soon for his profit,—but it was his glory to hasten a cure : he was no pretender to practice ; whatever he undertook he persevered in ; and, if, by his diligence, he fortunately had rapid success, he was moderate, very moderate, in his charges, and left it to the generosity of the patient, or friends, to make him what compliment they pleased.

“ But,

"But, sir, (cried the Governor, who saw this eternal egotist made no pause, nor preparations to relieve the lady,) sir, if you please, we will hear of your merits some other time. The lady requires your immediate care."

"Certainly, sir; don't I know that?—I am now studying for her benefit."

"And, as I said before, my dear sir, (returned the Governor,) we know it all:—have the goodness now to pay your attention here."

"Impatience never does good, (replied the doctor;) but now, sir, I have settled in my own mind the proper remedies, I desire you to withdraw, unless, indeed, you are her husband."

"No, indeed, I am not," replied the Governor briskly. Donna Padilla heaved a deep sigh, and cast a languishing look at Don Lopez, which, to avoid taking notice of, he withdrew.

After

After some time, the Marchioness, who had staid with the unfortunate woman, returned to them. "I am really vexed (said she) to say, that the lady is most shockingly hurt; the leg is in a bad state, and really I am inclined to think, with the surgeon, it may prove a much worse and a more tedious cure than a broken limb. If she has any friends, they should be sent for: we have done all that humanity requires, and cannot attend the progress of her cure."

"I will see her, (said the Governor,) and I hope for the last time; for she is the most detestable of all women in my eyes,—except the Countess le Marr; they are proper associates for each other."

He entered the room; the surgeon had renewed his loquacity, but stopped a moment on his entrance.

"I come, madam, to know if we can any farther be useful to you, by sending any one from Estella, or elsewhere. We are obliged to pursue our journey without delay."

"Tell

“Tell me, (said she, faintly,) are you married?”

“No, nor in all probability ever shall be.”

“Do you no longer love Adelaide?”

“Yes, I adore her more than ever, but I dare not think of her;—that Adelaide, so cruelly treated and insulted, is of a rank superior to mine, of ample fortune; her father is unexpectedly restored, and we are now going, I hope, to meet him.”

“*She*, she a woman of rank and fortune!—detested intelligence, I do not believe it! I hate her,—oh! how cordially I hate her!”

“It would better become you (said he, sternly,) to hold other sentiments in the situation you are in, and from whence, perhaps, you will never emerge. Adieu, madam; repent,—amend your life, and may heaven forgive you!”

He hastened out of the room, seeing her in violent agitations, and heartily hoped he should never see her more!

Her

Her woman had told the Marchioness that they were going to France, her lady taking her route through Arragon rather than Navarre, that she might avoid meeting any of her former acquaintance, and having a few distant relations at Paris, she intended to reside there for some time. This amiable lady and Adelaide were equally shocked to leave her in such a state, and in such hands, and concluded that it was their duty to let some of her relations and companions in Estella know of her situation :— whether she might take it ill or well, the consequence must be to her advantage, to have some friend about her.

After speaking to the people of the house, to be careful and attentive to her, giving the same charge to the surgeon and her woman : they gladly proceeded on their journey, alighting at the Governor's castle in Estella without meeting any further interruption. They had scarcely entered the
hall,

hall, before the major domo told his master that, about seven days preceding that, a gentleman, who called himself the Count de Beauvais, had been there, making inquiries relative to the Countess le Marr, and a young lady who accompanied her, and that he had directed him on to the house of the Lady Marchioness, since which he had heard nothing of him.

Adelaide was not present at this relation, and the Governor communicated it in a less abrupt manner; but she was ready to expire with joy, and would willingly have set off that very evening.

The Marchioness, however, dispatched a servant for intelligence, and the Governor sent another on to Tudella, lest he should have pursued the Countess there, and prevailed on Adelaide to remain at the castle a few days, till the servants returned.—
Having once more brought Adelaide under
the

the care of her good friends, it is time to throw a look back on the other parties, who, entangled in their own wicked devices, were severely suffering for their evil designs against a friendless orphan.

END OF VOL. III.

